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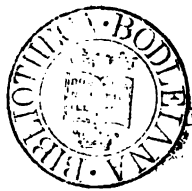
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TO
ISAAC BUTT, ESQ., LL.D., M.R.I.A.,

BARRISTER AT LAW,

AND ONE OF THE ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF DUBLIN.

MY DEAR BUTT,

If there is anything that takes from the satisfaction I feel in dedicating to you this new and general issue of all my works, it is a regret that they are not more worthy of having such a name as yours prefixed to them,—a name even already singularly distinguished in both literature and eloquence—and which promises to shed a lustre upon your profession and your country, unsurpassed by that which emanated from those great and brilliant spirits whose intellectual eminence reflects such glory upon Ireland.

With sentiments of the highest esteem and admiration for your genius and principles,

Believe me to be, my dear Butt,

Most faithfully and sincerely yours,

W. CARLETON.

DUBLIN.



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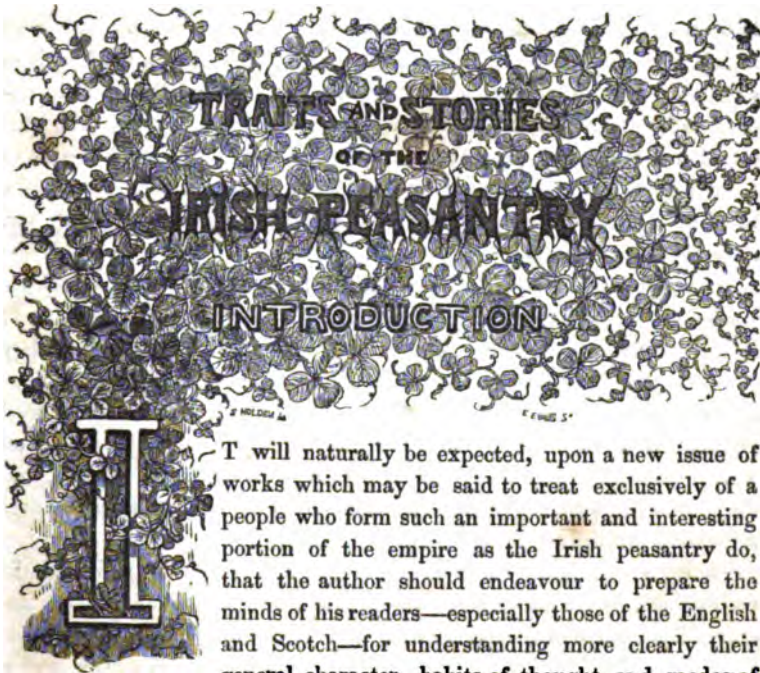
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T will naturally be expected, upon a new issue of works which may be said to treat exclusively of a people who form such an important and interesting portion of the empire as the Irish peasantry do, that the author should endeavour to prepare the minds of his readers—especially those of the English and Scotch—for understanding more clearly their general character, habits of thought, and modes of feeling, as they exist and are depicted in the subsequent volumes. This is a task which the author undertakes more for the sake of his country than himself; and he rejoices that the demand for the present edition puts it in his power to aid in removing many absurd prejudices which have existed for time immemorial against his countrymen.

It is well known that the character of an Irishman has been hitherto uniformly associated with the idea of something unusually ridiculous, and that scarcely anything in the shape of language was supposed to proceed from his lips but an absurd *congeries* of brogue and blunder. The habit of looking upon him in a ludicrous light has been so strongly impressed upon the English mind, that no opportunity has ever been omitted of throwing him into an attitude of gross and overcharged caricature, from which you might as correctly estimate his intellectual strength and moral proportions, as you would the size of a man from his evening shadow. From the immortal bard of Avon down to the writers of the present day, neither play nor farce has ever been presented to Englishmen, in which, when an

Irishman is introduced, he is not drawn as a broad grotesque blunderer, every sentence he speaks involving a bull, and every act the result of headlong folly, or cool but unstudied effrontery. I do not remember an instance in which he acts upon the stage any other part than that of the buffoon of the piece, uttering language which, wherever it may have been found, was at all events never heard in Ireland, unless upon the boards of a theatre. As for the Captain O'Cutters, O'Blunders, and Dennis Bulgrudgeries of the English stage, they never had existence except in the imagination of those who were as ignorant of the Irish people as they were of their language and feelings. Even Sheridan himself was forced to pander to this erroneous estimate and distorted conception of our character; for, after all, Sir Lucius O'Trigger was *his* Irishman, but not Ireland's Irishman. I know that several of my readers may remind me of Sir Boyle Roche, whose bulls have become not only notorious, but proverbial. It is well known now, however, and was when he made them, that they were studied bulls, resorted to principally for the purpose of putting the government and opposition sides of the Irish House of Commons into good humour with each other, which they never failed to do—thereby, on more occasions than one, probably, preventing the effusion of blood, and the loss of life, among men who frequently decided even their political differences by the sword or pistol.

That the Irish either were or are a people remarkable for making bulls or blunders, is an imputation utterly unfounded, and in every sense untrue. The source of this error on the part of our neighbours is, however, readily traced. The language of our people has been for centuries, and is up to the present day, in a transition state. The English tongue is gradually superseding the Irish. In my own native place, for instance, there is not by any means so much Irish spoken now, as there was about twenty or five-and-twenty years ago. This fact, then, will easily account for the ridicule which is, and I fear ever will be, unjustly heaped upon those who are found to use a language which they do not properly understand. In the early periods of communication between the countries, when they stood in a hostile relation to each other, and even long afterwards, it was not surprising that "the wild Irishman" who expressed himself with difficulty, and often impressed the idiom of his own language upon one with which he was not familiar, should incur, in the opinion of those who were strongly prejudiced against him, the character of making the bulls and blunders attributed to him. Such was the fact, and such the origin of this national slander upon his intellect,—a slander which, like every other, originates from the prejudice of those who were unacquainted with the quickness and clearness of thought that in general characterises

the language of our people. At this moment there is no man acquainted with the inhabitants of the two countries, who does not know, that, where the English is vernacular in Ireland, it is spoken with far more purity and grammatical precision than is to be heard beyond the Channel. Those, then, who are in the habit of defending what are termed our bulls, or of apologising for them, do us injustice; and Miss Edgeworth herself, when writing an essay upon the subject, wrote an essay upon that which does not, and never did exist. These observations, then, easily account for the view of us which has always been taken in the dramatic portion of English literature. There the Irishman was drawn in every instance as the object of ridicule, and consequently of contempt; for it is incontrovertibly true, that the man whom you laugh at, you will soon despise.

In every point of view this was wrong, but principally in a political one. At that time England and Englishmen knew very little of Ireland, and, consequently, the principal opportunities afforded them of appreciating our character were found on the stage. Of course, it was very natural that the erroneous estimate of us which they formed there should influence them everywhere else. We cannot sympathise with, and laugh at, the same object, at the same time; and if the Irishman found himself undeservedly the object of coarse and unjust ridicule, it was not very unnatural that he should requite it with a prejudice against the principles and feelings of Englishmen, quite as strong as that which was entertained against himself. Had this ridicule been confined to the stage, or directed at us in the presence of those who had other and better opportunities of knowing us, it would have been comparatively harmless. But this was not the case. It passed from the stage into the recesses of private life, wrought itself into the feelings until it became a prejudice, and the Irishman was consequently looked upon, and treated, as a being made up of absurdity and cunning,—a compound of knave and fool, fit only to be punished for his knavery or laughed at for his folly. So far, therefore, that portion of English literature which attempted to describe the language and habits of Irishmen, was unconsciously creating an unfriendly feeling between the two countries,—a feeling which, I am happy to say, is fast disappearing, and which only requires that we should have a full and fair acquaintance with each other in order to be removed for ever.

At present, indeed, their mutual positions, civil, commercial, and political, are very different from what they were half-a-century ago, or even at a more recent period. The progress of science, and the astonishing improvements in steam and machinery, have so completely removed the obstructions which impeded their intercourse, that the two nations can

now scarcely be considered as divided. As a natural consequence, their knowledge of each other has improved; and, as will always happen with generous people, they begin to see that the one was neither knave nor fool, nor the other a churl or a boor. Thus has mutual respect arisen from mutual intercourse, and those who hitherto approached each other with distrust, are beginning to perceive, that in spite of political or religious prejudices, no matter how stimulated, the truthful experience of life will in the event create nothing but good-will and confidence between the countries.

Other causes, however, led to this;—causes which in every state of society exercise a quick and powerful influence over the minds of men:—I allude to literature.

When the Irishman was made to stand forth as the butt of ridicule to his neighbours, the first that undertook his vindication was Maria Edgeworth. During her day, the works of no writer made a more forcible impression upon the circles of fashionable life in England, if we except the touching and inimitable *Melodies* of my countryman, Thomas Moore. After a lapse of some years, these two were followed by many others, who stood forth as lofty and powerful exponents of the national heart and intellect. Who can forget the melancholy but indignant reclamations of John Banim,—the dark and touching power of Gerald Griffin,—or the unrivalled wit and irresistible drollery of Samuel Lover? Nor can I omit remarking, that amidst the array of great talents to which I allude, the genius of our female writers bore off, by the free award of public opinion, some of the brightest wreaths of Irish literature. It would be difficult indeed, in any country, to name three women who have done more in setting right the character of Ireland and her people, whilst exhibiting at the same time the manifestations of high genius, than Miss Edgeworth, Lady Morgan, and Mrs. Hall. About the female creations of the last-named lady, especially, there is a touching charm, blending the graceful and the pensive, which reminds us of a very general but peculiar style of Irish beauty, where the lineaments of the face combine at once both the melancholy and the mirthful in such a manner, that their harmony constitutes the unchangeable but ever-varying tenderness of the expression.

That national works like these, at once so healthful and so true, produced by those who knew the country, and exhibiting Irishmen not as the blundering buffoons of the English stage, but as men capable of thinking clearly and feeling deeply—that such works, I say, should enable a generous people, as the English undoubtedly are, to divest themselves of the prejudices which they had so long entertained against us, is

both natural and gratifying. Those who achieved this great object, or aided in achieving it, have unquestionably rendered services of a most important nature to both the countries, as well as to literature in general.

Yet, whilst the highly gifted individuals whom I have named succeeded in making their countrymen respected, there was one circumstance which, notwithstanding every exhibition of their genius and love of country, still remained as a reproach against our character as a nation. For nearly a century we were completely at the mercy of our British neighbours, who probably amused themselves at our expense with the greater licence, and a more assured sense of impunity, inasmuch as they knew that we were utterly destitute of a national literature. Unfortunately the fact could not be disputed. For the last half century, to come down as far as we can, Ireland, to use a plain metaphor, instead of producing her native intellect for home consumption, was forced to subsist upon the scanty supplies which could be procured from the sister kingdom. This was a reproach which added great strength to the general prejudice against us.

A nation may produce one man or ten men of eminence, but if they cannot succeed in impressing their mind upon the spirit and intellect of their own country, so as to create *in her* a taste for literature or science, no matter how highly they may be appreciated by strangers, they have not reached the exalted purposes of genius. To make this more plain I shall extend the metaphor a little farther. During some of the years of Irish famine, such were the unhappy circumstances of the country, that she was exporting provisions of every description in the most prodigal abundance, which the generosity of England was sending back again for our support. So was it with literature. Our men and women of genius uniformly carried their talents to the English market, whilst we laboured at home under all the dark privations of a literary famine.

In truth until within the last ten or twelve years an Irish author never thought of publishing in his own country, and the consequence was that our literary men followed the example of our great landlords; they became absentees, and drained the country of its intellectual wealth precisely as the others exhausted it of its rents.

Thus did Ireland stand in the singular anomaly of adding some of her most distinguished names to the literature of Great Britain, whilst she herself remained incapable of presenting anything to the world beyond a school-book or a pamphlet; and even of the latter it is well known that if the subject of it were considered important, and its author a man of any talent or station in society, it was certain to be published in London.

Precisely in this state was the country when the two first volumes of the "Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry" were given to the public

by the house of Messrs. Curry and Co., of Saekville-street. Before they appeared, their author, in consequence of their originating from an Irish press, entertained no expectation that they would be read, or excite any interest whatever in either England or Scotland. He was not, however, without a strong confidence that notwithstanding the wild and uncleared state of his own country at the time, so far as native literature was concerned, his two little pioneers would work their way with at least moderate success. He felt conscious that every thing depicted in them was true, and that by those who were acquainted with the manners, and language, and feelings of the people, they would sooner or later be recognised as faithful delineations of Irish life. In this confidence the event justified him; for not only were his volumes stamped with an immediate popularity at home, where they could be best appreciated, but awarded a very gratifying position in the literature of the day by the unanimous and not less generous verdict of the English and Scotch critics.

Thus it was that the publication of two unpretending volumes, written by a peasant's son, established an important and gratifying fact—that our native country, if without a literature at the time, was at least capable of appreciating, and willing to foster the humble exertions of such as endeavoured to create one. Nor was this all; for so far as resident authors were concerned, it was now clearly established that an Irish writer could be successful at home without the necessity of appearing under the name and sanction of the great London or Edinburgh booksellers.

The rapid sale and success of the first series encouraged the author to bring out a second, which he did, but with a different bookseller. The spirit of publishing was now beginning to extend, and the talent of the country to put itself in motion. The popularity of the second effort surpassed that of the first, and the author had the gratification of knowing that the generosity of public feeling and opinion accorded him a still higher position than before, as did the critics of the day, without a dissentient voice. Still, as in the case of his first effort, he saw with honest pride that his own country and his countrymen placed the highest value upon his works, because they best understood them.

About this time the literary taste of the metropolis began to feel the first symptoms of life. As yet, however, they were very faint. Two or three periodicals were attempted, and though of very considerable merit, and conducted by able men, none of them, I believe, reached a year's growth. The "Dublin Literary Gazette," the "National Magazine," the "Dublin Monthly Magazine," and the "Dublin University Review," all perished in their infancy—not, however, because they were unworthy of success, but because Ireland was not then what she is now fast becom-

ing, a reading, and consequently a thinking, country. To every one of these the author contriuted, and he has the satisfaction of being able to say that there has been no publication projected purely for the advancement of literature in his own country, to which he has not given the aid of his pen, such as it was, and this whether he received remuneration or not. Indeed, the consciousness that the success of his works had been the humble means of inciting others to similar exertion in their own country, and of thus giving the first impulse to our literature, is one which has on his part created an enthusiastic interest in it which will only die with him.

Notwithstanding the failure of the Periodicals just mentioned, it was clear that the intellect of the country was beginning to feel its strength, and put forth its power. A national spirit that rose above the narrow distinctions of creed and party began to form itself, and in the first impulses of its early enthusiasm a periodical was established, which it is only necessary to name—the “Dublin University Magazine”—a work unsurpassed by any magazine of the day; and which, moreover, without ever departing from its principles, has been as a bond of union for literary men of every class, who have from time to time enriched its pages by their contributions. It has been, and is, a neutral spot in a country where party feeling runs so high, on which the Roman Catholic Priest and the Protestant parson, the Whig, the Tory, and the Radical, divested of their respective prejudices, can meet in an amicable spirit. I mention these things with great satisfaction, for it is surely a gratification to know that literature, in a country which has been so much distracted as Ireland, is progressing in a spirit of noble candour and generosity, which is ere long likely to produce a most salutary effect among the educated classes of all parties, and consequently among those whom they influence. The number, ability, and importance of the works which have issued from the Dublin press within the last eight or ten years, if they could be enumerated here, would exhibit the rapid progress of the national mind, and satisfy the reader that Ireland in a few years will be able to sustain a native literature as lofty and generous, and beneficial to herself, as any other country in the world can boast of.

This hasty sketch of its progress I felt myself called upon to give, in order that our neighbours may know what we have done, and learn to respect us accordingly; and, if the truth must be told, from a principle of honest pride, arising from the position which our country holds, and is likely to hold as an intellectual nation.

Having disposed of this topic I come now to one of not less importance as being connected with the other,—the condition and character of the peasantry of Ireland.

It may be necessary, however, before entering upon this topic, to give my readers some satisfactory assurance that the subject is one which I ought well to understand, not only from my humble position in early life, and my uninterrupted intercourse with the people as one of themselves, until I had reached the age of twenty-two years, but from the fact of having bestowed upon it my undivided and most earnest attention ever since I left the dark mountains and green vales of my native Tyrone, and began to examine human life and manners as a citizen of the world. As it is admitted, also, that there exists no people whose character is so anomalous as that of the Irish, and consequently so difficult to be understood, especially by strangers, it becomes a still more appropriate duty on my part to give to the public, proofs sufficiently valid, that I come to a subject of such difficulty with unusual advantages on my side, and that, consequently, my exhibitions of Irish peasant life, in its most comprehensive sense, may be relied on as truthful and authentic. For this purpose, it will be necessary that I should give a brief sketch of my own youth, early station in society, and general education, as the son of an honest humble peasant.

My father, indeed, was a very humble man, but in consequence of his unaffected piety and stainless integrity of principle, he was held in high esteem by all who knew him, no matter what their rank in life might be. When the state of education in Ireland during his youth and that of my mother is considered, it will not be a matter of surprise that what they did receive was very limited. It would be difficult, however, if not impossible to find two persons in their lowly station so highly and singularly gifted. My father possessed a memory not merely great or surprising, but absolutely astonishing. He could repeat nearly the whole of the Old and New Testament by heart, and was, besides, a living index to almost every chapter and verse you might wish to find in it. In all other respects, too, his memory was equally amazing. My native place is a spot rife with old legends, tales, traditions, customs, and superstitions; so that in my early youth, even beyond the walls of my own humble roof, they met me in every direction. It was at home, however, and from my father's lips in particular, that they were perpetually sounding in my ears. In fact his memory was a perfect storehouse, and a rich one, of all that the social antiquary, the man of letters, the poet, or the musician, would consider valuable. As a teller of old tales, legends, and historical anecdotes he was unrivalled, and his stock of them was inexhaustible. He spoke the Irish and English languages with nearly equal fluency. With all kinds of charms, old ranns, or poems, old prophecies, religious superstitions, tales of pilgrims, miracles, and pilgrimages, anec-

notes of blessed priests and friars, revelations from ghosts and fairies, was he thoroughly acquainted. And so strongly were all these impressed upon my mind, by frequent repetition on his part, and the indescribable delight they gave me on mine, that I have hardly ever since heard, during a tolerably enlarged intercourse with Irish society, both educated and uneducated—with the antiquary, the scholar, or the humble *senachie*—any single tradition, usage, or legend, that, as far as I can at present recollect, was perfectly new to me or unheard before, in some similar or cognate dress. This is certainly saying much; but I believe I may assert with confidence, that I could produce, in attestation of its truth, the names of Petrie, Sir W. Betham, Ferguson, and O'Donovan, the most distinguished antiquaries, both of social usages and otherwise, that ever Ireland produced. What rendered this besides of such peculiar advantage to me in after life, as a literary man, was, that I heard them as often in the Irish language as in the English, if not oftener: a circumstance which enabled me in my writings to transfer the genius, the idiomatic peculiarity and conversational spirit of the one language into the other, precisely as the people themselves do in their dialogue, whenever the heart or imagination happens to be moved by the darker or better passions.

Having thus stated faithfully, without adding or diminishing, a portion, and a portion only, of what I owe to one parent, I cannot overlook the debt of gratitude which is due to the memory of the other.

My mother, whose name was Kelly—Mary Kelly—possessed the sweetest and most exquisite of human voices. In her early life, I have often been told by those who had heard her sing, that any previous intimation of her presence at a wake, dance, or other festive occasion, was sure to attract crowds of persons, many from a distance of several miles, in order to hear from her lips the touching old airs of their country. No sooner was it known that she would attend any such meeting, than the fact spread through the neighbourhood like wild-fire, and the people flocked from all parts to hear her, just as the fashionable world do now, when the name of some eminent songstress is announced in the papers; with this difference, that upon such occasions the voice of the one falls only upon the ear, whilst that of the other sinks deeply into the heart. She was not so well acquainted with the English tongue as my father, although she spoke it with sufficient ease for all the purposes of life; and for this reason, among others, she generally gave the old Irish versions of the songs in question, rather than the English ones. This, however, as I said, was not her sole motive. In the first place, she had several old songs, which at that time,—I believe too I may add at this,—had never been translated; and I very much fear that some valuable ones, both as to words and airs,

have perished with her. Her family were all imbued with a poetical spirit, and some of her immediate ancestors composed in the Irish tongue, several fine old songs, in the same manner as Carolan did; that is, some in praise of a patron or a friend, and others to celebrate rustic beauties, that have long since been sleeping in the dust. For this reason she had many old compositions that were almost peculiar to our family, which I am afraid could not now be procured at all, and are consequently lost. I think her uncle, and I believe her grandfather, were the authors of several Irish poems and songs, because I know that some of them she *sang*, and others she only *recited*.

Independently of this, she had a prejudice against singing the Irish airs to English words; an old custom of the country was thereby invaded, and an association disturbed which habit had rendered dear to her. I remember on one occasion, when she was asked to sing the English version of that touching melody "The Red-haired Man's Wife," she replied, "I will sing it for you; but the English words and the air are like a quarrelling man and wife: *the Irish melts into the tune, but the English doesn't*"—an expression scarcely less remarkable for its beauty than its truth. She spake the words in Irish.

This gift of singing with such sweetness and power the old sacred songs and airs of Ireland, was not the only one for which she was remarkable. Perhaps there never lived a human being capable of giving the Irish cry, or Keene, with such exquisite effect, or of pouring into its wild notes, a spirit of such irresistible pathos and sorrow. I have often been present when she has "raised the keene" over the corpse of some relative or neighbour, and my readers may judge of the melancholy charm which accompanied this expression of her sympathy, when I assure them that the general clamour of violent grief was gradually diminished, from admiration, until it became ultimately hushed, and no voice was heard but her own—wailing in sorrowful but solitary beauty. This pause, it is true, was never long, for however great the admiration might be which she excited, the hearts of those who heard her soon melted, and even strangers were often forced to confess her influence by the tears which she caused them to shed for those whose deaths could, otherwise, in no other way have affected them. I am the youngest, I believe, of fourteen children, and of course could never have heard her until age and the struggles of life had robbed her voice of its sweetness. I heard enough, however, from her blessed lips, to set my heart to an almost painful perception of that spirit which steepes these fine old songs in a tenderness which no other music possesses. Many a time, of a winter night, when seated at her spinning-wheel, singing the *Trougha*, or *Skuil agra*, or some other old "song of sorrow," have

I, then little more than a child, gone over to her, and with a broken voice and eyes charged with tears, whispered "Mother dear, don't sing that song, it makes me sorrowful;" she then usually stopped, and sung some one which I liked better because it affected me less. At this day I am in possession of Irish airs, which none of our best antiquaries in Irish music have heard, except through me, and of which neither they nor I myself know the names.

Such, gentle reader, were my humble parents, under whose untaught, but natural genius, setting all other advantages aside, it is not to be wondered at that my heart should have been so completely moulded into that spirit and those feelings which characterize my country and her children.

These, however, were my domestic advantages; but I now come to others, which arose from my position in life as the son of a man who was one of the people. My father, at the farthest point to which my memory goes back, lived in a townland called Prilliak, in the parish of Clogher, and county of Tyrone; and I only remember living there in a cottage. From that the family removed to a place called Tonagh, or, more familiarly, Towny, about an English mile from Prilliak. It was here I first went to school to a Connaught-man named Pat Frayne, who, however, remained there only for a very short period in the neighbourhood. Such was the neglected state of education at that time, that for a year or two afterwards there was no school sufficiently near to which I could be sent. At length it was ascertained that a master, another Connaught-man by the way, named O'Beirne, had opened a school,—a hedge-school, of course,—at Findramore. To this I was sent, along with my brother John, the youngest of the family next to myself. I continued with him for about a year and a half, when who should return to our neighbourhood but Pat Frayne, the redoubtable prototype of Mat Kavanagh in "the Hedge School." O'Beirne, it is true, was an excellent specimen of the hedge-schoolmaster, but nothing at all to be compared to Frayne. About the period I write of, there was no other description of school to which any one could be sent, and the consequence was, that rich and poor (I speak of the peasantry), Protestant and Catholic, Presbyterian and Methodist, boys and girls, were all congregated under the same roof, to the amount of from a hundred to a hundred and fifty, or two hundred. In this school I remained for about a year or two, when our family removed to a place called Nurchasy, the property of the Rev. Dr. Story, of Corick. Of us, however, he neither could nor did know any thing, for we were under-tenants, our immediate landlord being no less a person than Hugh Traynor, then so famous for the distillation, *sub rosa*, of exquisite *mountain dew*, and to whom the reader will find allusions made in that capacity

more than once in the following volumes. Nurchasy was within about half-a-mile of Findramore, to which school, under O'Beirne, I was again sent. Here I continued, until a classical teacher came to a place called Tulnavert, now the property of John Birney, Esq., of Lisburn, to whom I had the pleasure of dedicating the two first volumes of my "Traits and Stories." This tyrannical blockhead, whose name I do not choose to mention, instead of being allowed to teach classics, ought to have been put into a strait-waistcoat or the stocks, and either whipped once in every twenty-four hours, or kept in a madhouse until the day of his death. He had been a student in Maynooth, where he became deranged, and was, of course, sent home to his friends, with whom he recovered sufficiently to become cruel and hypocritical, to an extent which I have never yet seen equalled. Whenever the son of a rich man committed an offence, he would grind his teeth and growl like a tiger, but in no single instance had he the moral courage or sense of justice to correct him. On the contrary, he uniformly "nursed his wrath to keep it warm," until the son of a poor man transgressed, and on his unfortunate body he was sure to wreak signal vengeance for the stupidity or misconduct of the wealthy blockhead. This was his system, and my readers may form some opinion of the low ebb at which knowledge and moral feeling were at the time, when I assure them, that not one of the humbler boys durst make a complaint against the scoundrel at home, unless under the certainty of being well flogged for their pains. A hedge-schoolmaster was then held in such respect and veneration, that no matter how cruel or profligate he might be, his person and character, unless in some extraordinary case of cruelty, resulting in death or mutilation, were looked upon as free from all moral or legal responsibility. This certainly was not the fault of the people, but of those laws, which, by making education a crime, generated ignorance, and then punished it for violating them.

For the present it is enough to say, that a most interesting child, a niece of my own, lost her life by the severity of Pat Frayne, the Connaught-man. In a fit of passion he caught the poor girl by the ear, which he nearly plucked out of her head. The violence of the act broke some of the internal muscles or tendons,—suppuration and subsequently inflammation, first of the adjoining parts and afterwards of the brain, took place, and the fine intelligent little creature was laid in a premature grave, because the ignorance of the people justified a pedantic hedge-schoolmaster in the exercise of irresponsible cruelty. Frayne was never prosecuted, neither was the classical despot, who by the way sits for the picture of the fellow in whose school, and at whose hands, the Poor Scholar receives the tyrannical and heartless treatment mentioned in that

tale. Many a time the cruelty exercised towards that unhappy boy, whose name was Quin, has wrung my heart and brought the involuntary tears to my eyes,—tears which I was forced to conceal, being very well-assured from experience, that any sympathy of mine, if noticed, would be certain to procure me or any other friend of his, an ample participation in his punishment. He was, in truth, the scape-goat of the school, and it makes my blood boil, even whilst I write, to think how the poor friendless lad, far removed from either father or mother, was kicked, and cuffed, and beaten on the naked head, with a kind of stick between a horse-rod and a cudgel, until his poor face got pale, and he was forced to totter over to a seat in order to prevent himself from fainting or falling in consequence of severe pain.

At length, however, the inhuman villain began to find, when it was too late, that his ferocity, in spite of the terror which it occasioned, was soon likely to empty his school. He now became as fawning and slavish as he had before been insolent and savage; but the wealthy farmers of the neighbourhood, having now full cognizance of his conduct, made common cause with the poorer men whose children were so shamefully treated, and the result was, that in about six weeks they forced him to leave that part of the country for want of scholars, having been literally groaned out of it by the curses and indignation of all who knew him.

Here then was I once more at a loss for a school, and I must add, in no disposition at all to renew my acquaintance with literature. Our family had again removed from Nurchasy, to a place up nearer the mountains, called Springtown, on the northern side of the parish. I was now about fourteen, and began to feel a keen relish for all the sports and amusements of the country, into which I entered with a spirit of youth and enthusiasm rarely equalled. For about two years I attended no school, but it was during this period that I received, notwithstanding, the best part of my education. Our farm in Springtown was about sixteen or eighteen acres, and I occasionally assisted the family in working at it, but never regularly, for I was not called upon to do so, nor would I have been permitted even had I wished it. It was about six months after our removal to Springtown, that an incident in my early life occurred which gave rise to one of the most popular tales perhaps, with the exception of the Miser, that I have written—that is the Poor Scholar. There being now no classical school within eighteen or twenty miles of Springtown, it was suggested to our family by a nephew of the parish priest, then a young man of six or eight and twenty, that, under the circumstances, it would be a prudent step on their part to prepare an outfit, and send me up to Munster as a poor scholar, to complete my education. Pat Frayne, who

by the way had been a poor scholar himself, had advised the same thing before, and as the name does not involve disgrace I felt no reluctance in going, especially as the priest's nephew, who proposed it, had made up his mind on accompanying me for a similar purpose. Indeed, the poor scholars who go to Munster are indebted for nothing but their bed and board, which they receive kindly and hospitably from the parents of the scholars. The masters are generally paid their full terms by these pitiable beings, but this rule, like all others, of course has its exceptions. At all events, my outfit was got ready, and on a beautiful morning in the month of May I separated from my family to go in quest of education. There was no collection, however, in my case, as mentioned in the tale; as my own family supplied the funds supposed to be necessary. I have been present, however, at more than one collection made for similar purposes, and heard a good-natured sermon not very much differing from that given in the story.

The priest's nephew, on the day we were to start, suddenly changed his mind, and I consequently had to undertake the journey alone, which I did with a heavy heart. The farther I got from home the more my spirits sank, or, in the beautiful image of Goldsmith,

“ I dragged at each remove a lengthening chain.”

I travelled as far as the town of Granard, and during the journey, it is scarcely necessary to say, that the almost parental tenderness and hospitality which I received on my way could not be adequately described. The reader will find an attempt at it in the story. The parting from home and my adventures on the road are real.

Having reached Granard my courage began to fail, and my family at home, now that I had departed from them, began also to feel something like remorse for having permitted one so young and inexperienced as I then was, to go abroad alone upon the world. My mother's sorrow, especially, was deep, and her cry was, “ Oh, why did I let my boy go? maybe I will never see him again !”

At this time, as the reader may be aware from my parental education, there was not a being alive more thoroughly imbued with superstition; and, whether for good or ill, at all events that superstition returned me to my family. On reaching Granard I felt, of course, fatigued, and soon went to bed, where I slept soundly. It was not, however, a dreamless sleep: I thought I was going along a strange path to some particular place, and that a mad bull met me on the road, and pursued me with such speed and fury that I awoke in a state of singular terror. That was sufficient; my mind had been already wavering, and the dream determined me. The next morning after breakfast I bent my steps home-

wards, and, as it happened, my return took a weighty load of bitter grief from the heart of my mother and family. The house I stopped at in Granard was a kind of small inn, kept by a man whose name was Peter Grehan. Such were the incidents which gave rise to the tale of "The Poor Scholar."

I was now growing up fast, and began to feel a boyish ambition of associating with those who were older and bigger than myself. Although miserably deficient in education—for I had been well beaten but never taught—yet I was looked upon as a prodigy of knowledge; and I can assure the reader that I took very good care not to dispel that agreeable delusion. Indeed, at this time, I was as great a young literary coxcomb as ever lived, my vanity being high and inflated exactly in proportion to my ignorance, which was also of the purest water. This vanity, however, resulted as much from my position and circumstances as from any strong disposition to be vain on my part. It was generated by the ignorance of the people, and their extreme veneration for any thing in the shape of superior knowledge. In fact, they insisted that I knew every earthly subject, because I had been a couple of years at Latin, and was designed for a priest. It was useless to undeceive men who would not be convinced, so I accordingly gave them, as they say, "the length of their tether;" nay, to such purpose did I ply them with proofs of it, that my conversation soon became as fine a specimen of pedantic bombast as ever was uttered. Not a word under six feet could come out of my lips, even of English; but as the best English, after all, is but common-place, I peppered them with vile Latin, and an occasional verse in Greek, from St. John's Gospel, which I translated for them into a wrong meaning, with an air of lofty superiority that made them turn up their eyes with wonder. I was then, however, but one of a class which still exists, and will continue to do so until a better informed generation shall prevent those who compose it from swaggering about in all the pompous pride of young impostors, who boast of knowing "the seven languages." The reader will find an illustration of this in the sketch of "Denis O'Shaughnessy going to Maynooth."

In the meantime, I was unconsciously but rapidly preparing myself for a position in Irish literature, which I little dreamt I should ever occupy. I now mingled in the sports and pastimes of the people, until indulgence in them became the predominant passion of my youth. Throwing the stone, wrestling, leaping, foot-ball, and every other description of athletic exercise filled up the measure of my early happiness. I attended every wake, dance, fair, and merry-making in the neighbour-

hood, and became so celebrated for dancing hornpipes, jigs, and reels, that I was soon without a rival in the parish.

This kind of life, though very delightful to a boy of my years, was not, however, quite satisfactory, as it afforded me no ultimate prospect, and the death of my father had occasioned the circumstances of the family to decline. I heard, about this time, that a distant relative of mine, a highly respectable priest, had opened a classical school near Glasslough, in the county of Monaghan. To him I accordingly went, mentioned our affinity, and had my claims allowed. I attended his school with intermission for about two years, at the expiration of which period I once more returned to our family, who were then very much reduced.

I was now about nineteen, strong, active, and could leap two-and-twenty feet on a dead level; but though thoroughly acquainted with Irish life among my own class, I was as ignorant of the world as a child. Ever since my boyhood, in consequence of the legends which I had heard from my father, about the far-famed Lough-derg, or St. Patrick's Purgatory, I felt my imagination fired with a romantic curiosity to perform a station at that celebrated place. I accordingly did so, and the description of that most penal performance, some years afterwards, not only constituted my *début* in literature, but was also the means of preventing me from being a pleasant, strong-bodied parish priest at this day; indeed, it was the cause of changing the whole destiny of my subsequent life.

"The Lough-derg Pilgrim" is given in the present edition, and may be relied on, not so much as an ordinary narrative, as a perfect transcript of what takes place during the stations which are held there in the summer months.

Having returned from this, I knew not exactly how to dispose of myself. On one thing I was determined—never to enter the Church;—but this resolution I kept faithfully to myself. I had nothing for it now but to forget my sacerdotal prospects, which, as I have said, had already been renounced, or to sink down as many others like me had done, into a mere tiller of the earth,—a character in Ireland far more unpopular than that which the Scotch call "a sticket minister!"

It was about this period, that chance first threw the inimitable Adventures of the renowned Gil Blas across my path. During my whole life, I had been an insatiable reader of such sixpenny romances and history-books as the hedge-schools afforded. Many a time have I given up my meals, rather than lose one minute from the interest excited by the story I was perusing. Having read Gil Blas, however, I felt an irrepressible passion for adventure, which nothing could divert; in fact, I was as much

the creature of the impulse it excited, as the ship is of the helmsman, or the steam-engine of the principle that guides it.

Stimulated by this romantic love of adventure, I left my native place, and directed my steps to the parish of Killanny, in the county of Louth, the Catholic Clergyman of which was a nephew of our own Parish Priest, brother to him who proposed going to Munster with me, and an old school-fellow of my own, though probably twenty years my senior. This man's residence was within a quarter or half a mile's distance of the celebrated Wild-goose Lodge, in which some six months before a whole family, consisting of, I believe, eight persons, men, women and children, had been, from motives of personal vengeance, consumed to ashes. I stopped with him for a fortnight, and succeeded in procuring a tuition in the house of a wealthy farmer named Piers Murphy, near Corcreagh. This, however, was a tame life, and a hard one, so I resolved once more to give up a miserable salary and my board, for the fortunate chances which an ardent temperament, and a strong imagination, perpetually suggested to me as likely to be evolved out of the vicissitudes of life. Urged on, therefore, by a spirit of romance, I resolved to precipitate myself on the Irish Metropolis, which I accordingly entered with two shillings and ninepence in my pocket; an utter stranger, of course friendless; ignorant of the world, without aim or object, but not without a certain strong feeling of vague and shapeless ambition, for the truth was I had not yet begun to think, and, consequently, looked upon life less as a reality than a vision.

Thus have I, as a faithful, but I fear a dull guide, conducted my reader from the lowly cottage in Prillisk, where I first drew my breath, along those tangled walks and green lanes which are familiar to the foot of the peasant alone, until I enter upon the highways of the world, and strike into one of its greatest and most crowded thoroughfares—the Metropolis. Whether this brief sketch of my early and humble life, my education, my sports, my hopes and struggles, be calculated to excite any particular interest, I know not; I can only assure my reader that the details, so far as they go, are scrupulously correct and authentic, and that they never would have been obtruded upon him, were it not from an anxiety to satisfy him that in undertaking to describe the Irish peasantry as they are, I approached that difficult task with advantages of knowing them, which perhaps few other Irish writers ever possessed; *and this is the only merit which I claim.*

A few words now upon the moral and physical condition of the people may not be unsuitable before I close, especially for the sake of those who may wish to acquire a slight knowledge of their general character, previous

to their perusal of the volumes which are to follow. This task, it is true, is not one of such difficulty now as it was some years ago. Much light has been thrown on the Irish character, not only by the great names I have already enumerated, but by some equally high which I have omitted. On this subject it would be impossible to overlook the names of Lever, Maxwell, or Otway, or to forget the mellow hearth-light and chimney-corner tone, the happy dialogue and legendary truth which characterise the exquisite fairy legends of Crofton Croker. Much of the difficulty of the task, I say, has been removed by these writers, but there remains enough still behind to justify me in giving a short dissertation upon the habits and feelings of my countrymen.

Of those whose physical state has been and is so deplorably wretched, it may not be supposed that the tone of morals can be either high or pure; and yet if we consider the circumstances in which he has been for such a lengthened period placed, it is undeniable that the Irishman is a remarkably moral man. Let us suppose, for instance, that in England and Scotland the great body of the people had for a couple or three centuries never received an adequate or proper education: in that case, let us ask, what the moral aspect of society in either country would be to-day? But this is not merely the thing to be considered. The Irishman was not only *not* educated, but actually punished for attempting to acquire knowledge in the first place, and in the second, punished also for the ignorance created by its absence. In other words, the penal laws rendered education criminal, and then caused the unhappy people to suffer for the crimes which proper knowledge would have prevented them from committing. It was just like depriving a man of his sight, and afterwards causing him to be punished for stumbling. It is beyond all question, that from the time of the wars of Elizabeth and the introduction of the Reformation, until very recently, there was no fixed system of wholesome education in the country. The people, possessed of strong political and religious prejudices, were left in a state of physical destitution and moral ignorance, such as were calculated to produce ten times the amount of crime which was committed. Is it any wonder, then, that in such a condition, social errors and dangerous theories should be generated, and that neglect, and poverty, and ignorance combined should give to the country a character for turbulence and outrage? The same causes will produce the same effects in any country, and were it not that the standard of personal and domestic comfort was so low in Ireland, there is no doubt that the historian would have a much darker catalogue of crime to record than he has. The Irishman, in fact, was mute and patient under circumstances which would have driven the better-fed and more comfortable Englishman into open

outrage and contempt of all authority. God forbid that I for a moment should become the apologist of crime, much less the crimes of my countrymen! but it is beyond all question that the principles upon which the country was governed have been such as to leave down to the present day many of their evil consequences behind them. The penal code, to be sure, is now abolished, but so are not many of its political effects among the people. Its consequences have not yet departed from the country, nor has the hereditary hatred of the laws, which unconsciously descended from father to son, ceased to regulate their conduct and opinions. Thousands of them are ignorant that ever such a thing as a penal code existed; yet the feeling against law survives, although the source from which it has been transmitted may be forgotten. This will easily account for much of the political violence and crime which moments of great excitement produce among us; nor need we feel surprised that this state of things should be continued, to the manifest injury of the people themselves, by the baneful effects of agitation.

The period, therefore, for putting the character of our country fairly upon its trial has not yet arrived; although we are willing to take the Irishman as we find him; nor would we shrink even at the present moment from comparing him with any of his neighbours. His political sins and their consequences were left him as an heir-loom, and result from a state of things which he himself did not occasion. Setting these aside, where is the man to be found in any country who has carried with him through all his privations and penalties so many of the best virtues of our nature? In other countries the man who commits a great crime is always a great criminal, and the whole heart is hardened and debased, but it is not so in Ireland. The agrarian and political outrage is often perpetrated by men who possess the best virtues of humanity, and whose hearts as individuals actually abhor the crime. The moral standard here is no doubt dreadfully erroneous, and until a correct and christian one, emanating from a better system of education, shall be substituted for it, it will, with a people who so think and feel, be impossible utterly to prevent the occurrence of these great evils. We must wait for thirty or forty years, that is, until the rising or perhaps the subsequent generation shall be educated *out* of these wild and destructive prejudices, before we can fully estimate the degree of excellence to which our national character may arrive. In my own youth, and I am now only forty-four years, I do not remember a single school under the immediate superintendence of either priest or parson, and that in a parish the extent of which is, I dare say, ten miles by eight. The instruction of the children was altogether a matter in which no clergy of any creed took an interest. This was left

altogether to hedge schoolmasters, a class of men who, with few exceptions, bestowed such an education upon the people as is sufficient almost, in the absence of all other causes, to account for much of the agrarian violence and erroneous principles which regulate their movements and feelings on that and similar subjects. For further information on this matter the reader is referred to the "Hedge School."

With respect to these darker shades of the Irish character, I feel that, consistently with that love of truth and impartiality which has guided, and I trust ever shall guide, my pen, I could not pass them over without further notice. I know that it is a very questionable defence to say that some, if not principally all, of their crimes originate in agrarian or political vengeance. Indeed, I believe that, so far from this circumstance being looked upon as a defence, it ought to be considered as an aggravation of the guilt; inasmuch as it is, beyond all doubt, at least a far more manly thing to inflict an injury upon an enemy face to face, and under the influence of immediate resentment, than to crouch like a cowardly assassin behind a hedge and coolly murder him without one moment's preparation, or any means whatsoever of defence. This is a description of crime which no man with one generous drop of blood in his veins can think of without shame and indignation. Unhappily, however, for the security of human life, every crime of the kind results more from the dark tyranny of these secret confederacies, by which the lower classes are organised, than from any natural appetite for shedding blood. Individually, the Irish loathe murder as much as any people in the world; but in the circumstances before us, it often happens that the Irishman is not a free agent,—very far from it: on the contrary, he is frequently made the instrument of a system, to which he must become either an obedient slave or a victim.

Even here, however, although nothing can or ought to be said, to palliate the cowardly and unmanly crime of assassination, yet something can certainly be advanced to account for the state of feeling by which, from time to time, and by frequent occurrence, it came to be so habitual among the people, that by familiarity it became stripped of its criminality and horror.

Now it is idle, and it would be dishonest, to deny the fact, that the lower Irish, until a comparatively recent period, were treated with apathy and gross neglect by the only class to whom they could or ought to look up for sympathy or protection. The conferring of the elective franchise upon the forty shilling freeholders, or in other words upon paupers, added to the absence of proper education, or the means of acquiring it, generated, by the fraudulent sub-division of small holdings, by bribery, perjury, and corruption, a state of moral feeling among the poorer classes which could

not but be productive of much crime. And yet, notwithstanding this shameful prostitution of their morals and comfort, for the purposes of political ambition or personal aggrandisement, they were in general a peaceable and enduring people; and it was only when some act of unjustifiable severity, or oppression in the person of a middleman, agent, or hard-hearted landlord, drove them houseless upon the world, that they fell back upon the darker crimes of which I am speaking. But what, I ask, could be expected from such a state of things? And who generated it? It is not, indeed, to be wondered at that a set of men, who so completely neglected their duties as the old landlords of Ireland did, should have the very weapons turned against themselves which their own moral profligacy first put into the hands of those whom they corrupted. Up to this day the peasantry are charged with indifference to the obligation of an oath, and in those who still have anything to do in elections, I fear with too much truth. But then let us inquire who first trained and familiarised them to it? Why, the old landlords of Ireland; and now their descendants, and such of themselves as survive, may behold, in the crimes which disgrace the country, the disastrous effects of a bad system created by their forefathers or themselves.

In the mean time, I have no doubt that by the removal of the causes which produced this deplorable state of things, their disastrous effects will also soon disappear. That the present landlords of Ireland are, with the ordinary number of exceptions, a very different class of men from those who have gone before them, is a fact which will ultimately tell for the peace and prosperity of the country. Let the ignorance of the people, or rather the positive bad knowledge with which, as to a sense of civil duties, their minds are filled, be removed, and replaced with principles of a higher and more Christian tendency. Let the Irish landlords consider the interests of their tenantry as their own, and there is little doubt that with the aids of science, agricultural improvement, and the advantages of superior machinery, the Irish will become a prosperous, contented, and great people.

It is not just to the general character of our people, however, to speak of these crimes as national, for, in fact, they are not so. If Tipperary and some of the adjoining parts of Munster were blotted out of the moral map of the country, we would stand as a nation in a far higher position than that which we occupy in the opinion of our neighbours. This is a distinction which in justice to us ought to be made, for it is surely unfair to charge the whole kingdom with the crimes which disgrace only a single county of it, together with a few adjacent districts—allowing, of course, for some melancholy exceptions in other parts.

Having now discussed, with I think sufficient candour and impartiality that portion of our national character which appears worst and weakest in the eyes of our neighbours, and attempted to show that pre-existing circumstances originating from an unwise policy had much to do in calling into existence and shaping its evil impulses, I come now to a more agreeable task—the consideration of our social and domestic virtues. And here it is where the Irishman immeasurably outstrips all competitors. His hospitality is not only a habit but a principle; and indeed of such a quick and generous temperament is he, that in ninety cases out of a hundred the feeling precedes the reflection, which in others prompts the virtue. To be a stranger and friendless, or suffering hunger and thirst, is at any time a sufficient passport to his heart and purse; but it is not merely the thing or virtue, but also his manner of doing it, that constitutes the charm which runs through his conduct. There is a natural politeness and sincerity in his manner which no man can mistake; and it is a fact, the truth of which I have felt a thousand times, that he will make you feel the acceptance of the favour or kindness he bestows to be a compliment to himself rather than to you. The delicate ingenuity with which he diminishes the nature or amount of his own kindness, proves that he is no common man either in heart or intellect; and when all fails he will lie like Lucifer himself, and absolutely seduce you into an acceptance of his hospitality or assistance. I speak now exclusively of the peasantry. Certainly in domestic life there is no man so exquisitely affectionate and humanized as the Irishman. The national imagination is active and the national heart warm, and it follows very naturally that he should be, and is, tender and strong in all his domestic relations. Unlike the people of other nations, his grief is loud but lasting, vehement but deep; and whilst its shadow has been chequered by the laughter and mirth of a cheerful disposition, still in the moments of seclusion, at his bedside prayer, or over the grave of those he loved, it will put itself forth after half a life with a vivid power of recollection which is sometimes almost beyond belief.

The Irish, however, are naturally a refined people; but by this I mean the refinement which appreciates and cherishes whatever there is in nature, as manifested through the influence of the softer arts of music and poetry. The effect of music upon the Irish heart I ought to know well, and no man need tell me that a barbarous or cruel people ever possessed national music that was beautiful and pathetic. The music of any nation is the manifestation of its general feeling, and not that which creates it; although there is no doubt but the one when formed perpetuates and reproduces the other. It is no wonder, then, that the domestic feelings

of the Irish should be so singularly affectionate and strong, when we consider that they have been, in spite of every obstruction, kept under the softening influence of music and poetry. This music and poetry, too, essentially their own—and whether streaming of a summer evening along their pastoral fields, echoing through their still glens, or poured forth at the winter hearth, still, by its soft and melancholy spirit, stirring up a thousand tender associations that must necessarily touch and improve the heart. And it is for this reason that that heart becomes so remarkably eloquent, if not poetical, when moved by sorrow. Many a time I have seen a Keener commence her wail over the corpse of a near relative, and by degrees she has risen from the simple wail or cry to a high but mournful recitative, extemporized, under the excitement of the moment, into sentiments that were highly figurative and impressive. In this she was aided very much by the genius of the language, which possesses the finest and most copious vocabulary in the world for the expression of either sorrow or love.

It has been said that the Irish, notwithstanding a deep susceptibility of sorrow, are a light-hearted people; and this is strictly true. What, however, is the one fact but a natural consequence of the other? No man for instance ever possessed a high order of humour, whose temperament was not naturally melancholy, and no country in the world more clearly establishes that point than Ireland. Here the melancholy and mirth are not simply in a proximate state, but frequently flash together, and again separate so quickly, that the alternation or blending, as the case may be, whilst it is felt by the spectators, yet stands beyond all known rules of philosophy to solve it. Any one at all acquainted with Ireland, knows that in no country is mirth lighter, or sorrow deeper, or the smile and the tear seen more frequently on the face at the same moment. Their mirth, however, is not levity, nor their sorrow gloom; and for this reason none of those dreary and desponding reactions take place, which, as in France especially, so frequently terminate in suicide.

The recreations of the Irish were very varied and some of them of a highly intellectual cast. These latter, however, have altogether disappeared from the country, or at all events are fast disappearing. The old Harper is now hardly seen; the Senachie, where he exists, is but a dim and faded representative of that very old Chronicler in his palmy days; and the Prophecy-man unfortunately has survived the failure of his best and most cherished predictions. The poor old Prophet's stock in trade is nearly exhausted, and little now remains but the slaughter which is to take place at the mill of Louth, when the mill is to be turned three times with human blood, and the miller to have six fingers and two thumbs on each hand, as a collateral prognostication of that bloody event.

The amusement derived from these persons was undoubtedly of a very imaginative character, and gives sufficient proof, that had the national intellect been duly cultivated, it is difficult to say in what position as a literary country Ireland might have stood at this day. At present the national recreations, though still sufficiently varied and numerous, are neither so strongly marked nor diversified as formerly. Fun, or the love of it, to be sure, is an essential principle in the Irish character; and nothing that can happen, no matter how solemn or how sorrowful it may be, is allowed to proceed without it. In Ireland the house of death is sure to be the merriest one in the neighbourhood; but here the mirth is kindly and considerately introduced, from motives of sympathy—in other words, for the alleviation of the mourners' sorrow. The same thing may be said of its association with religion. Whoever has witnessed a Station in Ireland made at some blessed lake or holy well, will understand this. At such places it is quite usual to see young men and women devoutly circum-ambulating the well or lake on their bare knees with all the marks of penitence and contrition strongly impressed upon their faces; whilst again, after an hour or two, the same individuals may be found in a tent dancing with ecstatic vehemence to the music of the bagpipe or fiddle.

All these things, however, will be found, I trust I may say faithfully, depicted in the following volumes—together with many other important features of our general character; which I would dwell on here, were it not that they are detailed very fully in other parts of my works, and I do not wish to deprive them of the force of novelty when they occur, nor to appear heavy by repetition.

In conclusion, I have endeavoured, with what success has been already determined by the voice of my own country, to give a panorama of Irish life among the people—comprising at one view all the strong points of their general character—their loves, sorrows, superstitions, piety, amusements, crimes and virtues; and in doing this, I can say with solemn truth that I painted them honestly, and without reference to the existence of any particular creed or party.



series of intermingled hills and vales, which bounded this extensive carpet

NED M'KEOWN's house stood exactly in an angle, formed by the cross roads of Kiltrudden. It was a long, whitewashed building, well thatched and furnished with the usual appurtenances of yard and offices. Like most Irish houses of the better sort, it had two doors, one opening into a garden that sloped down from the rear in a southern direction. The

barn was a continuation of the dwelling-house, and might be distinguished from it by a darker shade of colour, being only rough-cast. It was situated on a small eminence, but, with respect to the general locality of the country, in a delightful vale, which runs up, for twelve or fourteen miles, between two ranges of dark, well-defined mountains, that give to the interjacent country the form of a low inverted arch. This valley, which altogether, allowing for the occasional breaks and intersections of hill-ranges, extends upwards of thirty miles in length, is the celebrated valley of the "Black Pig," so well known in the politico-traditional history of Ireland, and the legends connected with the famous Beal Dearg*. That part of it where Ned M'Keown resided was peculiarly beautiful and romantic. From the eminence on which the house stood, a sweep of the most fertile meadow-land stretched away to the foot of a

* The following extract, taken from a sketch by the author called "The Irish Prophecy-man," contains a very appropriate illustration of the above passage. "I have a little book that contains a prophecy of the milk-white hind an' the bloody panther, an' a foreboding

towards the north. Through these meadows ran a smooth river, called the *Mullin-burn*, which wound its way through them with such tortuosity, that it was proverbial in the neighbourhood to say of any man remarkable for dishonesty, "he's as crooked as the Mullin-burn," an epithet which was sometimes, although unjustly, jocularly applied to Ned himself. This deep but narrow river had its origin in the glens and ravines of a mountain which bounded the vale in a south-eastern direction; and after sudden and heavy rains, it tumbled down with such violence and impetuosity over the crags and rock-ranges in its way, and accumulated so amazingly, that on reaching the meadows it inundated their surface, carrying away sheep, cows, and cocks of hay upon its yellow flood. It also boiled and eddied, and roared with a hoarse *sugh*, that was heard at a considerable distance.

On the north-west side ran a ridge of high hills, with the cloud-capped peak of Knockmany rising in lofty eminence above them: these, as they extended towards the south, became gradually deeper in their hue, until

of the slaughter there's to be in the Valley of the Black Pig, as foretold by Beal Derg, or the prophet wid the red mouth, who never was known to speak but when he prophesied, or to prophesy but when he spoke.

"The Lord bless an' keep us!—an' why was he called the Man wid the Red Mouth, Barney?"

"I'll tell you that: first, becase he always prophesied about the slaughter an' fightin' that was to take place in the time to come; an', secondly, becase, while he spoke, the red blood always trickled out of his mouth, as a proof that what he foretold was true."

"Glory be to God! but that's wonderful all out. Well, well!"

"Ay, an' Beal Derg, or the Red Mouth, is still livin'."

"Livin'! why, is he a man of our own time?"

"Our own time! The Lord help you! It's more than a thousand years since he made the prophecy. The case you see is this: he an' the ten thousand witnesses are lyin' in an enchanted sleep in one of the Montherlony mountains."

"An' how is that known, Barney?"

"It's known. Every night at a certain hour one of the witnesses—an' they're all sogers, by the way—must come out to look for the sign that's to come."

"An' what is that, Barney?"

"It's the fiery cross; an' when he sees one on sich of the four mountains of the north, he's to know that the same sign's abroad in all the other parts of the kingdom. Beal Derg an' his men are then to waken up, an' by their aid the Valley of the Black Pig is to be set free for ever."

"An' what is the Black Pig, Barney?"

"The Prospitarian church, that stretches from Eenniskillen to Darry, an' back again from Darry to Eenniskillen."

"Well, well, Barney, but prophecy is a strange thing to be sure! Only think of men livin' a thousand years!"

"Every night one of Beal Derg's men must go to the mouth of the cave, which opens of itself, an' then look out for the sign that's expected. He walks up to the top of the mountain, an' turns to the four corners of the heavens, to thry if he can see it; an' when he finds that he cannot, he goes back to Beal Derg, who, after the other touches him, starts up, an' axis him, 'Is the time come?' He replies, 'No; the *man is*, but the *hour is not!*' an' that instant they're both asleep again. Now, you see, while the soger is on the mountain top, the mouth of the cave is open, an' any one may go in that might happen to see it. One man it appears did, an' wishin' to know from curiosity whether the sogers were dead or livin', he touched one of them wid his hand, who started up an' axed him the same question, 'Is the time come?' Very fortunately he said '*No;*' an' that minute the soger was as sound in his trance as before."

"An', Barney, what did the soger mane when he said 'The man is, but the hour is not!'"

"What did he mane? I'll tell you that. The man is Bonyparty, which manes, when put into proper explanation, the *right side*; that is, the true cause. Larned men have found *that* out."

at length they assumed the shape and form of heath-clad mountains, dark and towering. The prospect on either range is highly pleasing, and capable of being compared with any I have ever seen, in softness, variety, and that serene lustre which reposes only on the surface of a country rich in the beauty of fertility, and improved by the hand of industry and taste. Opposite Knockmany, at a distance of about four miles, on the south-eastern side, rose the huge and dark outline of Cullimore, standing out in gigantic relief against the clear blue of a summer sky, and flinging down his frowning and haughty shadow, almost to the firm-set base of his lofty rival; or, in winter, wrapped in a mantle of clouds, and crowned with unsullied snow, reposing in undisturbed tranquillity, whilst the loud voice of storms howled around him.

To the northward, immediately behind Cullimore, lies Althadhawan, a deep, craggy, precipitous glen, running up to its very base, and wooded with oak, hazel, rowan-tree, and holly. This picturesque glen extends two or three miles, until it melts into the softness of grove and meadow, in the rich landscape below. Then, again, on the opposite side, is *Lumford's Glen*, with its overhanging rocks, whose yawning depth and silver waterfall, of two hundred feet, are at once finely and fearfully contrasted with the elevated peak of Knockmany, rising into the clouds above it.

From either side of these mountains may be seen six or eight country towns—the beautiful grouping of hill and plain, lake, river, grove, and dell—the reverend cathedral*—the white-washed cottage, and the comfortable farm-house. To these may be added the wild upland and the cultivated demesne, the green sheep-walk, the dark moor, the splendid mansion, and ruined castle of former days. Delightful remembrance! Many a day, both of sunshine and storm, have I, in the strength and pride of happy youth, bounded, fleet as the mountain roe, over these blue hills! Many an evening, as the yellow beams of the setting sun shot slantingly, like rafters of gold, across the depth of this blessed and peaceful valley, have I followed, in solitude, the impulses of a wild and wayward fancy, and sought the quiet dell, or viewed the setting sun, as he scattered his glorious and shining beams through the glowing foliage of the trees, in the vista where I stood; or wandered along the river, whose banks were fringed with the hanging willow, whilst I listened to the thrush singing among the hazels that crowned the aloping green above me, or watched the plashing otter, as he ventured from the dark angles and intricacies of the upland glen, to seek his prey in the meadow-stream during the favourable dusk of twilight. Many a time have I heard the simple song of Roger M'Cann, coming from the top of brown Dunroe, mellowed, by the stillness of the hour, to something far sweeter to the heart than all that the laboured pomp of musical art and science can effect; or, the song of Katty Roy, the beauty of the village, streaming across the purple-flowered moor,

"Sweet as the shepherd's pipe upon the mountains."

Many a time, too, have I been gratified, in the same poetical hour, by the sweet sound of honest Ned M'Keown's ungreased cart-wheels, clack-

* To-wit of Clogher.

ing, when nature seemed to have fallen asleep after the day-stir and animation of rural business—for Ned was sometimes a carman—on his return from Dublin with a load of his own groceries, without as much money in his pocket as would purchase oil, wherewith to silence the sounds which the friction produced—regaling his own ears the while, as well as the music of the cart would permit his melody to be heard, with his favourite tune of *Cannie Soogah* *.

Honest, blustering, good-humoured Ned was the indefatigable merchant of the village; ever engaged in some ten or twenty pound speculation, the capital of which he was sure to extort, perhaps for the twelfth time, from the savings of Nancy's frugality, by the equivocal test of a month or six weeks' consecutive sobriety, and which said speculation he never failed to wind up by the total loss of the capital for Nancy, and the capital loss of a broken head for himself. Ned had eternally some bargain on his hands: at one time you might see him a yarn-merchant, planted in the next market-town, upon the upper step of Mr. Birney's hall-door, where the yarn-market was held, surrounded by a crowd of eager country-women, anxious to give Ned the preference, first, because he was a well-wisher; secondly, because he hadn't his heart in the penny; and thirdly, because he gave sixpence a spangle more than any other man in the market.

There might Ned be found, with his twenty pounds of hard silver jingling in the bottom of a green bag, as a decoy to his customers, laughing loud as he piled the yarn in an ostentatious heap, which, in the pride of his commercial sagacity, he had purchased at a dead loss. Again you might see him at a horse-fair, cantering about on the back of some sleek but broken-winded jade, with spavined legs, imposed on him as "a great bargain entirely," by the superior cunning of some rustic sharper; or standing over a hog'shead of damaged flaxseed, in the purchase of which he shrewdly suspected himself of having overreached the seller—by allowing him for it a greater price than the prime seed of the market would have cost him. In short, Ned was never out of a speculation, and whatever he undertook was sure to prove a complete failure. But he had one mode of consolation, which consisted in sitting down with the fag-end of Nancy's capital in his pocket, and drinking night and day with this neighbour and that, whilst a shilling remained; and when he found himself at the end of his tether, he was sure to fasten a quarrel on some friend or acquaintance, and to get his head broken for his pains.

None of all this blustering, however, happened within the range of Nancy's jurisdiction. Ned, indeed, might drink and sing, and swagger and fight—and he contrived to do so; but notwithstanding all his apparent courage, there was *one* eye which made him quail, and before which he never put on the hector;—there was *one*, in whose presence the loudness of his song would fall away into a very awkward and unmusical quaver, and under whose glance his laughing face often changed to the visage of a man who is disposed to anything but mirth.

The fact was this: Whenever Ned found that his speculation was *gone*

* "The Jolly Pedlar,"—a fine old Irish air.

*a shaughran**, as he termed it, he fixed himself in some favourite public-house, from whence he seldom stirred while his money lasted, except when dislodged by Nancy, who usually, upon learning where he had taken cover, paid him an unceremonious visit, to which Ned's indefensible delinquency gave the colour of legitimate authority. Upon these occasions, Nancy, accompanied by two sturdy "servant-boys," would sally forth to the next market-town, for the purpose of bringing home "graceless Ned," as she called him. And then you might see Ned between the two servants, a few paces in advance of Nancy, having very much the appearance of a man performing a pilgrimage to the gallows, or of a deserter guarded back to his barrack, in order to become a target for the muskets of his comrades. Ned's compulsory return always became a matter of some notoriety; for Nancy's excursion in quest of the "graceless," was not made without frequent denunciations of wrath against him, and many melancholy apologies to the neighbours for entering upon the task of personally securing him. By this means her enterprise was sure to get wind, and a mob of the idle young men and barefooted urchins of the village, with Bob M'Cann, "*a three-quarter clift*" † of a fellow—half knave, half fool, was to be found a little below the village, upon an elevation of the road that commanded a level stretch of half a mile or so, in anxious expectation of the procession. No sooner had this arrived at the point of observation, than the little squadron would fall rearward of the principal group, for the purpose of extracting from Nancy a full and particular account of the capture.

* Gone astray.

† This is equal to the proverb—"he wants a square," that is, though knavish not thoroughly rational; in other words, a combination of knave and fool.—Bob, in consequence of his accomplishments, was always a great favourite in the village. Upon some odd occasions he was a ready and willing drudge at everything, and as strong as a ditch. Give him only a good fog-meal—which was merely a trifle, just what would serve three men or so—give him, we say, a fog-meal of this kind, about five times a day, with a liberal promise of more, and never was there a Scotch Brownie who could get through so much work. He knew no fatigue; frost and cold had no power over him; wind, sleet, and hail he laughed at; rain! it stretched his skin, he said, after a meal—and that, he added, was a comfort. Notwithstanding all this, he was neither more nor less than an impersonation of laziness, craft, and gluttony. The truth is, that unless in the hope of being gorged he would do nothing; and the only way to get anything out of him was, never to let the gorge precede the labour, but always, on the contrary, to follow it. Bob's accomplishments were not only varied, but of a very elevated order, and the means of holding him in high odour amongst us. Great and wonderful, Heaven knows, did we look upon his endowments to be. No man, wise or otherwise, could "hunt the brock," alias the badger, within a hundred miles of Bob; for when he covered his mouth with his two hands, and gave forth the very sounds which the badger is said to utter, did we not look upon him—Bob—with as much wonder and reverence as we would have done upon the badger himself? Phup-um-phup—phup-um-phup—phup-um—phup-um—phup-um-phup. Who but a first-rate genius could accomplish this feat in such a style? Bob could crow like a cock, bark like a dog, mew like a cat, neigh like a horse, bray like an ass, or gobble like a turkey-cock. Unquestionably, I have never heard him equalled as an imitator of birds and beasts. Bob's crack feat, however, was performing the *Screw-pin Dance*, of which we have only this to say, that by whatsoever means he became acquainted with it, it is precisely the same dance which is said to have been exhibited by some strolling Moor before the late Queen Caroline. It is, indeed, very strange, but no less true, that many of the oriental customs are yet prevalent in the remote and isolated parts of Ireland. Had the late Mr. O'Brien, author of the *Essay on Irish Round Towers*, seen Bob perform the dance I speak of, he would have hailed him as a regular worshipping of Budh, and adduced his performance as a living confirmation of his theory. Poor Bob! he is gone the way of all fools, and all flesh.

"Indeed, childher, it's no wonder for yez to enquire! Where did I get nim, Dick?—musha, and where would I get him but in the ould place, a-hagur; with the ould set: don't yez know that a dacent place or dacent company wouldn't sarve Ned?—nobody but Shane Martin, and Jimmy Tague, and the other blackguards*."

"And what will you do with him, Nancy?"

"Och! thin, Dick, avourneen, it's myself that's jist tired thinking of that; at any rate, consumin to the loose foot he'll get this blessed month to come, Dick, agra!"

"Throth, Nancy," another mischievous monkey would exclaim, "if you hadn't great patience entirely, you couldn't put up with such threatment, at all at all."

"Why thin, God knows, it's true for you, Barney. D'ye hear that, 'graceless?' the very childher making a laughing-stock and a may-game of you!—but wait till we get under the roof, any how."

"Ned," a third would say, "isn't it a burning shame for you to break the poor crathur's heart, this a-way? Throth, but you ought to hould down your head, sure enough—a dacent woman! that only for her you wouldn't have a house over you, so you wouldn't."

"And throth and the same house is going, Tim," Nancy would exclaim, "and when it goes, let him see thin who'll do for him; let him thry if his blackguards will stand to him, when he won't have poor foolish Nancy at his back."

During these conversations, Ned would walk on between his two guards with a dogged-looking and condemned face; Nancy behind him, with his own cudgel, ready to administer an occasional bang, whenever he attempted to slacken his pace, or throw over his shoulder a growl of dissent or justification.

On getting near home, the neighbours would occasionally pop out their heads, with a smile of good-humoured satire on their faces, which Nancy was very capable of translating:

"Ay," she would say, addressing them, "I've caught him—here he is to the fore. Indeed you may well laugh, Katty Rafferty; not a one of myself blames you for it.—Ah, ye mane crathur," aside to Ned, "if you had the blood of a hen in you, you wouldn't have the neighbours braking their hearts laughing at you in sich a way; and above all the people in the world, them Raffertys, that got the decree against us at the last sessions, although I offered to pay within fifteen shillings of the differ—the grubs!"

* The reader, here, is not to rely implicitly upon the accuracy of Nancy's description of the persons alluded to. It is true the men were certainly companions and intimate acquaintances of Ned's, but not entitled to the epithet which Nancy in her wrath bestowed upon them. Shane was a rollicking, fighting, drinking butcher, who cared not a fig whether he treated you to a drink or a drubbing. Indeed, it was at all times extremely difficult to say whether he was likely to give you the drink first or the drubbing afterwards, or *vice versa*. Sometimes he made the drubbing the groundwork for the drink, and quite as frequently the drink the groundwork for the drubbing. Either one or other you were sure to receive at his hands; but his general practice was to give both. Shane, in fact, was a good-humoured fellow, well liked, and nobody's enemy but his own. Jemmy Teague was a quiet man, who could fight his corner, however, if necessary. Shane was called Kit-togue Shane, from being left-handed. Both were butchers, and both, we believe, are alive and kicking at this day.

Having seen her hopeful charge safely deposited on the hob, Nancy would throw her cloak into this corner, and her bonnet into that, with the air of a woman absorbed by the consideration of some vexatious trial; she would then sit down, and, lighting her *dooden**, exclaim—

“Wurrah, wurrah! but it's me that's the heart-scalded crathur with that man's four quarters! The Lord may help me and grant me patience with him any way!—to have my little honest, hard-earned penny spint among a pack of vagabonds, that don't care if him and me wor both down the river, so they could get their skinful of drink out of him! No matther, agra! things can't long be this a-way; but what does Ned care?—give *him* drink and fighting, and his blackguards about him, and that's his glory. There now's the landlord coming down upon us for the rint; and unless he takes the cows out of the byre, or the bed from anundher us, what in the wide earth is there for him?”

The current of this lecture was never interrupted by a single observation from Ned, who usually employed himself in silently playing with “Bunty:” a little black cur, without a tail, and a great favourite with Nancy; or, if he noticed anything out of its place in the house, he would arrange it with great apparent care. In the meantime Nancy's wrath generally evaporated with the smoke of the pipe—a circumstance which Ned well knew; for after she had sucked it until it emitted a shrill, bubbling sound, like that from a reed, her brows, which wore at other times an habitual frown, would gradually relax into a more benevolent expression—the parenthetical curves on each side of her mouth, formed by the irascible pursing of her lips, would become less marked—the dog or cat, or whatever else came in her way, instead of being kicked aside, or pursued in an underfit of digressional peevishness, would be put out of her path with gentler force—so that it was, in such circumstances, a matter of little difficulty to perceive that conciliation would soon be the order of the day. Ned's conduct on these critical occasions was very prudent and commendable: he still gave Nancy her own way; never “jawed back to her;” but took shelter, as it were, under his own patience, until the storm had passed, and the sun of her good-humour began to shine out again. Nancy herself, now softened by the fumes of her own pigtail, usually made the first overtures to a compromise, but, without departing from the practice and principles of higher negociators, always in an indirect manner: as, “Biddy, avourneen,” speaking to her niece, “may be that crathur,” pointing to Ned, “ate nothing to-day; you had better, agra! get him the could bacon that 's in the cupboard, and warm for him, upon the *greeshough* †, them *yellow-legs* ‡, that's in the colindher; though God he knows it's ill my common§—but no matther, ahagur! there's enough said, I'm thinking—give them to him.”

On Ned seating himself to his bacon and potatoes, Nancy would light another pipe, and plant herself on the opposite hob, putting some interrogatory to him, in the way of business—always concerning a third person. and still in a tone of dry ironical indifference: as—

* A short pipe.

† Hot embers.

‡ A kind of potato.

§ It's ill becoming—or it ill becomes me, to overlook his conduct.

"Did you see Jimmy Connolly on your travels?"

"No."

"Humph! Can you tell us if Andy Morrow sould his coult?"

"He did."

"Maybe you have *gumption* enough to know what he got for him?"

"Fifteen guineas."

"In troth, and it's more nor a poor body would get; but, any way, Andy Morrow desarves to get a good price; he's a man that takes care of his own business, and minds nothing else. I wish that filly of ours was dockt; you ought to spake to Jim M'Quade about her: it's time to make her up—you know, we'll want to sell her for the rint."

This was an assertion, by the way, which Ned knew to have everything but truth in it.

"Never heed the filly," Ned would reply, "I'll get Charley Lawdher* to dock her—but it's not her I'm thinking of: did you hear the news about the tobacky?"

"No; but I hope we won't be long so."

"Well, any how, we wor in luck to buy in them three last rowls."

"Eh?—in luck? death-alive, how, Ned?"

"Sure there was three ships of it lost last week, on their way from the kingdom of Swuzzerland, in the Aist Indians, where it grows: we can raise it thruppence a-pound now."

"No, Ned! you're not in airnest?"

"Faith, Nancy, you may say I am; and as soon as Tom Loan comes home from Dublin, he'll tell us all about it; and for that matther, may-be it may rise sixpence a-pound: any how we'll gain a lob by it, I'm thinking."

"May I never stir, but that's luck! Well, Ned, you may thank me for that, any way, or sorra rowl we'd have in the four corners of the house; and you wanted to persuade me against buying them; but I knew betther—for the tobacky's always sure to get a bit of a hitch at this time o' the year."

"Bedad, you can do it, Nancy: I'll say that for you—that is, and give you your own way."

"Eh!—can't I, Ned? And, what was betther, I bate down Pether M'Entee three-ha'pence a-pound after I bought them."

"Ha! ha! ha!—by my sannies, Nancy, as to market-making, they may all throw their caps at you, you thief o' the world; you can do them nately!"

"Ha! ha! ha! Stop, Ned; don't drink that water—it's not from the garden-well. I'll jist mix a sup of this last stuff we got from the mountains, till you taste it: I think it's not worse nor the last—for Hugh Traynor's† an ould hand at making it."

This was all Ned wanted: his point was now carried; but with respect to the rising of the tobacco, the less that is said about that the better for his veracity.

* A blacksmith, and an honest man.

† Hugh, who by the way, is still living, and, I am glad to hear, in improved circumstances was formerly in the habit of making a drop of the right sort.

Having thus given the reader a slight sketch of Ned and Nancy, and of the beautiful valley in which this worthy speculator had his residence, I shall next proceed to introduce him to the village circle, which, during the long winter nights, might be found in front of Ned's kitchen-fire of blazing turf, whose light was given back in ruddy reflection from the bright pewter plates, that were ranged upon the white and well-scoured dresser in just and gradual order, from the small egg-plate to the large and capacious dish, whereon, at Christmas and Easter, the substantial round of corned beef used to rear itself so proudly over the more ignoble joints at the lower end of the table.

Seated in this clear-obscure of domestic light—which, after all, gives the heart a finer and more touching notion of enjoyment than the glitter of the theatre or the blaze of the saloon—might be found, first, Andy Morrow*, the juryman of the quarter-sessions, sage and important in the consciousness of legal knowledge, and somewhat dictatorial withal in its application to such knotty points as arose out of the subjects of their nocturnal debates. Secondly, Bob Gott, who filled the foreign and military departments, and related the wonderful history of the ghost which appeared to him on the night after the battle of Bunkers-hill. To him succeeded Tom M'Roarkin, the little asthmatic anecdotarian of half the country, remarkable for chuckling at his own stories. Then came old Bill M'Kinny, poacher and horse-jockey; little, squeaking, thin-faced Alick M'Kinley, a facetious farmer of substance; and Shane Fadh, who handed down traditions and fairy tales. Enthroned on one hob sat Pat Frayne, the schoolmaster with the short arm, who read and explained the newspaper for "Ould Square Colwell," and was looked upon as premier to the aforesaid cabinet; Ned himself filled the opposite seat of honour.

One night, a little before the Christmas holidays, in the year 18—, the personages just described were seated around Ned's fire, some with their chirping pints of ale or porter, and others with their quantum of *Hugh Traynor*, or mountain-dew, and all with good humour, and a strong tendency to happiness, visible in their faces. The night was dark, close, and misty; so dark, indeed, that, as Nancy said, "you could hardly see your finger before you." Ned himself was full of fun, with a pint of porter beside him, and a pipe in his mouth, just in his glory for the night. Opposite to him was Pat Frayne, with an old newspaper on his knee, which he had just perused for the edification of his audience; beside him was Nancy, busily employed in knitting a pair of sheep's-grey stockings for Ned; the remaining personages formed a semicircular ring about the hearth. Behind, on the kitchen-table, sat Paddy Smith, the servant-man, with three or four of the *gorsoons* of the village about him, engaged in a little under-plot of their own. On the other side, and a little removed from the light, sat Ned's two nieces, Biddy and Bessy Connolly, the former with Atty Johnson's mouth within whisper-reach of her ear, and the latter seated close to her professed admirer, Billy Fulton, her

* The names here are not fictitious. Andy Morrow, a most respectable and intelligent farmer, is not long dead, and few, if any, of the rest survive.

uncle's shopman*. This group was completely abstracted from the entertainment which was going forward in the circle round the fire.

"I wondher," said Andy Morrow, "what makes Joe M'Crea throw down that fine ould castle of his, in Aughtentain?"

"I'm tould," said M'Roarkin, "that he expects money; for they say there's a lot of it buried somewhere about the same building."

"Jist as much as there's in my wig," replied Shane Fadh, "and there's ne'er a pocket to it yet. Why, bless your sowl, how could there be money in it, whin the last man of the Grameses that owned it—I mane of the ould stock, afore it went into Lordy Mountjoy's hands—sould it out, ran through the money, and died begging aafter. Did none of you ever hear of

' _____ Ould John Grame,
' That *swally'd* the castle of Aughtentain! "

"That was long afore my time," said the poacher; "but I know that the rabbit-burrow between that and Jack Appleden's garden will soon be run out."

"Your time!" responded Shane Fadh, with contempt; "ay, and your father's afore you: *my* father doesn't remimber more nor seeing his funeral, and a merry one it was; for my grandfather, and some of them that had a respect for the family and his forbarers, if they hadn't it for himself, made up as much money among them as berried him dacently any how,—ay, and gave him a rousin' wake into the bargain, with lashins of whiskey, stout beer, and ale; for in them times—God be with them—every farmer brewed his own ale and beer; †—more betoken, that one pint of it was worth a keg of this wash of yours, Ned."

"Wasn't it he that used to *appear*?" inquired M'Roarkin.

"Sure enough he did, Tom."

"Lord save us," said Nancy, "what could trouble him, I dunna?"

"Why," continued Shane Fadh, "some said one thing, and some another; but the upshot of it was this: when the last of the Grameses sould the estate, castle and all, it seems he didn't resave all the purchase money; so, aafter he had spint what he got, he applied to the purchaser for the remainder—him that the Mountjoy family bought it from; but it seems he didn't draw up writings, or sell it according to law, so that the thief o' the world baffled him from day to day, and wouldn't give him a penny—bekase he knew, the blaggard, that the Square was then as poor as a church mouse, and hadn't money enough to thry it at law with him; but the Square was always a simple asy-going man. One day he went to this fellow, riding on an ould garran, with a shoe loose—the only baste he had in the world—and axed him, for God's sake, to give him some of what he owed him, if it was ever so little; 'for,' says he, 'I have not as much money betune me and death as will get a set of shoes for my horse.'

"'Well,' says the nager, 'if you're not able to keep your horse shod, I would jist recommend you to sell him, and thin his shoes won't cost you any thing,' says he.

* Each pair have been since married, and live not more happily than I wish them. Fulon still lives in Ned's house at the Cross-roads.

† Fact; about seventy or eighty years ago the farmers of Ireland brewed their own malt drink.

"The ould Square went away with tears in his eyes, for he loved the poor brute, bekase they wor the two last branches of the ould stock."

"Why," inquired M'Kinley, in his small squeaking voice, "was the horse related to the family?"

"I didn't say he was related to the fam——Get out, you *shingaun* *!" returned the old man, perceiving by the laugh that now went round, the sly tendency of the question—"no, nor to *your* family either, for he had nothing of the ass in him—eh? will you put that in your pocket my little *skinadhre*†—ha! ha! ha!"

The laugh was now turned against M'Kinley.

Shane Fadh proceeded: "The ould Square, as I was tellin' yez, cried to find himself an' the poor baste so dissolute; but when he had gone a bit from the fellow, he comes back to the vagabone—'Now,' says he, 'mind my words—if you happen to live afther me, you need never expect a night's pace; for I here make a serous an' solemn vow, that as long as my property's in your possession, or in any of your seed, breed, or generation's, I'll never give over hauntin' you an' them, till you'll rue to the back-bone your dishonesty an' chathery to me an' this poor baste, that hasn't a shoe to its foot.'

"'Well,' says the nager, 'I'll take chance of that, any way.'"

"I'm tould, Shane," observed the poacher, "that the Square was a fine man in his time, that wouldn't put up with sich treatment from anybody."

"Ay, but he was ould now," Shane replied, "and too wakely to fight.—A fine man, Bill!—he was the finest man, 'cepting ould Square Storey, that ever was in this country. I hard my granfather often say that he was six feet four, and made in proportion—a handsome, black-a-vis'd ‡ man, with great dark whiskers. Well! he spint money like sklates, and so he died miserable—but had a merry birrel, as I said."

"But," inquired Nancy, "did he ever *appear* to the rogue that chated him?"

"Every night in the year, Nancy, exceptin' Sundays; and what was more, the horse along with him—for he used to come ridin' at midnight upon the same garran; and it was no matther what place or company the other 'ud be in, the ould Square would come reglarly, and crave him for what he owed him."

"So it appears that horses have sows," observed M'Roarkin, philosophically, giving, at the same time, a cynical chuckle at the sarcasm contained in his own conceit.

"Whether they have sows or bodies," replied the narrator, "what I'm tellin' you is thruth; every night in the year the ould chap would come for what was indue him; and as the two went along, the noise of the loose shoe upon the horse would be hard rattlin', and seen knockin' the fire out of the stones, by the neighbours and the thief that chated him, even before the Square would appear, at all at all."

"Oh, wurrah!" exclaimed Nancy, shuddering with terror. "I

* Fairy-like, or connected with the fairies.

† A thin, fleshless, stunted person.

‡ Black-visaged.

wouldn't take anything, and be out now on the Drumfurrar road*, and nobody with me but myself."

"I think if you wor," said M'Kinley, "the light weights and short measures would be comin' across your conscience."

"No, in throth, Alick, wouldn't they; but may be if *you* wor, the promise you broke to Sally Mitchell might trouble you a bit: at any rate, I've a prayer, and if I only repated it *wanst*, I mightn't be afeard of all the divils in hell."

"Throth, but it's worth havin', Nancy: where did you get it?" asked M'Kinley.

"Hould your wicked tongue, you thief of a heretic," said Nancy, laughing, "when will *you* larn anything that's good? I got it from one that wouldn't have it if it *wasn't* good—Darby M'Murt, the pilgrim, since you must know."

"Whisht!" said Frayne: "upon my word, I blieve the old Square's comin' to pay us a visit; does any of yez hear a horse trottin' with a shoe loose?"

"I sartinly hear it," observed Andy Morrow.

"And I," said Ned himself.

There was now a general pause, and in the silence a horse, proceeding from the moors in the direction of the house, was distinctly heard; and nothing could be less problematical than that one of his shoes was loose.

"Boys, take care of yourselves," said Shane Fadh, "if the Square comes, he won't be a pleasant customer—he was a terrible fellow in his day: I'll hould goold to silver that he'll have the smell of brimstone about him."

"Nancy, where's your prayer *now*?" said M'Kinley, with a grin: "I think you had betther out with it, and thry if it keeps this old brimstone Square on the wrong side of the house."

"Behave yourself, Alick; it's a shame for you to be sich a hardened crathur: upon my sannies, I blieve you're afeard of neither God nor the divil—the Lord purtect and guard us from the dirty baste!"

"You mane particklarly them that uses short measures and light weights," rejoined M'Kinley.

There was another pause, for the horseman was within a few perches of the cross-roads. At this moment an unusual gust of wind, accompanied by torrents of rain, burst against the house with a violence that made its ribs creak; and the stranger's horse, the shoe still clanking, was distinctly heard to turn in from the road to Ned's door, where it stopped, and the next moment, a loud knocking intimated the horseman's intention to enter. The company now looked at each other, as if uncertain what to do. Nancy herself grew pale, and, in the agitation of the moment, forgot to think of her protecting prayer. Bidy and Bessy Connolly started from the *settle* on which they had been sitting with their sweethearts, and sprung beside their uncle, on the hob. The stranger was still knocking with great violence, yet there was no disposition among the company

* A lonely mountain-road, said to have been haunted. It is on this road that the coffin scene mentioned in the Party Fight and Funeral is laid.

to admit him, notwithstanding the severity of the night—blowing, as it really did, a perfect hurricane. At length a sheet of lightning flashed through the house, followed by an amazing loud clap of thunder; while, with a sudden push from without, the door gave way, and in stalked a personage whose stature was at least six feet four, with dark eyes and complexion, and coal-black whiskers of an enormous size, the very image of the Squire they had been describing. He was dressed in a long black surtout, which made him appear even taller than he actually was, had a pair of heavy boots upon him, and carried a tremendous whip, large enough to fell an ox. He was in a rage on entering; and the heavy, dark, close-knit brows, from beneath which a pair of eyes, equally black, shot actual fire, whilst the Turk-like whiskers, which curled themselves up, as it were, in sympathy with his fury, joined to his towering height, gave him altogether, when we consider the frame of mind in which he found the company, an appalling and almost supernatural appearance.

"Confound you, for a knot of lazy scoundrels," exclaimed the stranger, "why do you sit here so calmly, while any being craves admittance on such a night as this? Here, you lubber in the corner, with the pipe in your mouth, come and put up this horse of mine until the night settles."

"May the blessed Mother purtect us!" exclaimed Nancy, in a whisper to Andy Morrow, "if I believe he's a right thing!—would it be the ould Square? Did you ever set your eyes upon sich a?"—

"Will you bestir yourself, you boor, and not keep my horse and saddle out under such a torrent?" he cried, "otherwise I must only bring him into the house, and then you may say for once that you've had the devil under your roof."

"Paddy Smith, you lazy spalpeen," said Nancy, winking at Ned to have nothing to do with the horse, "why don't you fly and put up the gentleman's horse? And you, Atty, avourneen, jist go out with him, and hould the candle while he's doin' it: be quick now, and I'll give you glasses a-piece when you come in."

"Let them put him up quickly; but I say, you Caliban," added the stranger, addressing Smith, "don't be rash about him, except you can bear fire and brimstone; get him, at all events, a good feed of oats. Poor Satan!" he continued, patting the horse's head, which was now within the door, "you've had a hard night of it, my poor Satan, as well as myself. That's my dark spirit—my brave chuck, that fears neither man nor devil."

This language was by no means calculated to allay the suspicions of those who were present, particularly of Nancy and her two nieces. Ned sat in astonishment, with the pipe in his hand, which he had, in the surprise of the moment, taken from his mouth, his eyes fixed upon the stranger, and his mouth open. The latter noticed him, and stretching over the heads of the circle, tapped him on the shoulder with his whip:—

"I have a few words to say to you, sir," he said.

"To me, your honour!" exclaimed Ned, without stirring, however.

"Yes," replied the other, "but you seem to be fastened to your seat: come this way."

"By all manner of manes, sir," said Ned, starting up, and going over to the dresser, against which the stranger stood.

When the latter had got him there, he very coolly walked up, and secured Ned's comfortable seat on the hob, at the same time observing—

"You hadn't the manners to ask me to sit down; but I always make it a point of conscience to take care of myself, landlord."

There was not a man about the fire who did not stand up, as if struck with a sudden recollection, and offer him a seat.

"No," said he, "thank you, my good fellows, I am very well as it is: I suppose, mistress, you are the landlady," addressing Nancy; "if you be, I'll thank you to bring me a gill of your best whiskey—your *best*, mind. Let it be as strong as an evil spirit let loose, and as hot as fire; for it can't be a jot too ardent such a night as this, for a being that rides the devil."

Nancy started up instinctively, exclaiming, "Indeed, please your honour's Reverence, I am the landlady, as you say, sir, sure enough; but, the Lawk save and guard us! won't a gallon of raw whiskey be too much for one man to drink?"

"A gallon! I only said a gill, my good hostess; bring me a gill—but I forget—I believe you have no such measure in this country; bring me a pint, then."

Nancy now went into the bar, whither she gave Ned a wink to follow her; and truly was glad of an opportunity of escaping from the presence of the visitor. When there, she ejaculated—

"May the holy Mother keep and guard us, Ned, but I'm afeard that's no Christian crathur, at all at all! Arrah, Ned, aroon, would he be that ould Square Grame, that Shane Fadh, maybe, angered, by spakin' of him?"

"Troth," said Ned, "myself doesn't know what he is; he bates any mortal I ever seen."

"Well, hould, agra! I have it: we'll see whether he'll drink this or not, any how."

"Why, what's that you're doin'?" asked Ned.

"Jist," replied Nancy, "mixin' the smallest taste in the world of holy wather with the whiskey, and if he drinks *that*, you know he can be nothing that's bad *."

Nancy, however, did not perceive that the trepidation of her hand was such as to incapacitate her from making nice distinctions in the admixture. She now brought the spirits to the stranger, who no sooner took a mouthful of it than he immediately stopped it on its passage, and, fixing his eyes earnestly on herself, squirted it into the fire, and the next moment the whiskey was in a blaze that seemed likely to set the chimney in flames.

"Why, my *honest* hostess," he exclaimed, "do you give this to me for

* The efficacy of holy water in all Roman Catholic countries, but especially in Ireland, is supposed to be very great. It is kept in the house, or, in certain cases, about the person, as a safeguard against evil spirits, fairies, or sickness. It is also used to allay storms and quench conflagrations; and when an Irishman or Irishwoman is about to go a journey, commence labour, or enter upon any other important undertaking, the person is sure to be sprinkled with holy-water, under the hope that the journey or undertaking will prosper.

whiskey? Confound me, but two-thirds of it is water; and I have no notion to pay for water when I want spirits: have the goodness to exchange this, and get me some better stuff, if you have it."

He again put the jug to his mouth, and having taken a little, swallowed it:—"Why, I tell you, woman, you must have made some mistake; one-half of it is water."

Now, Nancy, from the moment he refused to swallow the liquor, had been lock-jawed; the fact was, she thought that the devil himself, or old Squire Graham, had got under her roof; and she stood behind Ned, who was nearly as terrified as herself, with her hands raised, her tongue clinging to the roof of her mouth, and the perspiration falling from her pale face in large drops. But as soon as she saw him swallow a portion of that liquid, which she deemed beyond the deglutition of ghost or devil, she instantly revived—her tongue resumed its accustomed office—her courage, as well as her good-humour, returned, and she went up to him with great confidence, saying,

"Why, then, your Reverence's honour, maybe I did make a bit of a mistake, sir," taking up the jug, and tasting its contents: "Hut! bad scran to me, but I did, beggin' your honour's pardon; how-an-diver, I'll soon rightify that, your Reverence."

So saying, she went and brought him a pint of the stoutest the house afforded. The stranger drank a glass of it, and then ordered hot water and sugar, adding—

"My honest friends here about the fire will have no objection to help me with this; but, on second consideration, you had better get us another quart, that, as the night is cold, we may have a jorum at this pleasant fire, that will do our hearts good; and this pretty girl here," addressing Biddy, who really deserved the epithet, "will sit beside me, and give us a song."

It was surprising what an effect the punch, even in perspective, had upon the visual organs of the company; second-sight was rather its precursor than its attendant; for, with intuitive penetration, they now discovered various good qualities in his ghostship, that had hitherto been beyond their ken; and those very personal properties, which before struck them dumb with terror, already called forth their applause.

"What a fine man he is!" one would whisper, loud enough, however, to be heard by the object of his panegyric.

"He is, indeed, and a rale gentleman," another would respond, in the same key.

"Hut! he's none of your proud, stingy, upsthart *bodaghs**—none of your beggarly half-sirs †," a third would remark: "he's the dacent thing entirely—you see he hasn't his heart in a thrifle."

"And so sign's on him," a fourth would add, with comic gravity, "he wasn't bred to shabbiness, as you may know by his fine behaviour and his big whiskers."

* A person vulgar, but rich, without any pretensions but those of wealth to the character of a gentleman; a churl.

† Half-sir; the same as above.

When the punch was made, and the kitchen-table placed endwise towards the fire, the stranger, finding himself very comfortable, inquired if he could be accommodated with a bed and supper, to which Nancy replied in the affirmative.

"Then, in that case," said he, "I will be your guest for the night."

Shane Fadh now took courage to repeat the story of old Squire Graham and his horse with the loose shoe; informing the stranger, at the same time, of the singular likeness which he bore to the subject of the story, both in face and size, and dwelling upon the remarkable coincidence in the time and manner of his approach.

"Tut, man!" said the stranger, "a far more extraordinary adventure happened to one of my father's tenants, which, if none of you have any objection, I will relate."

There was a buzz of approbation at this; and they all thanked his honour, expressing the strongest desire to hear his story. He was just proceeding to gratify them, when another rap came to the door, and, before any of the inmates had time to open it, Father Ned Deleery and his curate made their appearance, having been on their way home from a conference held in the town of M—, eighteen miles from the scene of our present story.

It may be right here to inform the reader, that about two hundred yards from Ned's house, stood a place of Roman Catholic worship, called "The Forth,"* from the resemblance it bore to the *Forst* or *Raths*, so common in Ireland. It was a small green, perfectly circular, and about twenty yards in diameter. Around it grew a row of old overspreading hawthorns, whose branches formed a canopy that almost shaded it from sun and storm. Its area was encompassed by tiers of seats, one raised above another, and covered with the flowery grass. On these the congregation used to sit—the young men chatting or ogling their sweethearts on the opposite side; the old ones in little groups, discussing the politics of the day, as retailed by Mick M'Caffry †, the politician; while, up near the altar, hemmed in by a ring of old men and women, you might perceive a *votem*, repeating some new prayer or choice piece of devotion—or some other, in a similar circle, perusing, in a loud voice, Doctor Gallagher's Irish Sermons, Pastorini's History of the Christian Church, or Columbkil's Prophecy—and, perhaps, a strolling pilgrim, the centre of a third collection, singing the *Dies iræ*, in Latin, or the Hermit of Killarney, in English.

At the extremity of this little circle was a plain altar of wood, covered with a little thatched shed, under which the priest celebrated mass; but before the performance of this ceremony, a large multitude usually assembled opposite Ned's shop-door, at the cross-roads. This crowd consisted of such as wanted to buy tobacco, candles, soap, potash, and such other groceries as the peasantry remote from market-towns require. After mass, the public-house was filled to the door-posts, with those who wished

* This very beautiful but simple place of worship does not now exist. On its site is now erected a Roman Catholic chapel.

† Mick was also a schoolmaster, and the most celebrated village politician of his day. Every Sunday found him engaged as in the text.

to get a sample of Nancy's *Iaka-behagh**; and many a time has little Father Ned himself, of a frosty day, after having performed mass with a celerity highly agreeable to his auditory, come in to Nancy, nearly frost-bitten, to get his breakfast, and a toothful of mountain-dew to drive the cold out of his stomach.

The fact is, that Father Deleery made himself quite at home at Ned's, without any reference to Nancy's saving habits; the consequence was, that her welcome to him was extremely sincere—"from the teeth out." Father Ned saw perfectly through her assumed heartiness of manner, but acted as if the contrary was the case: Nancy understood him also, and, with an intention of making up by complaisance for her niggardliness in other respects, was a perfect honeycomb. This state of cross-purposes, however, could not last long; neither did it. Father Ned never paid, and Nancy never gave credit; so, at length, they came to an open rupture: she threatened to process him for what he owed her, and he, in return, threatened to remove the congregation from "The Forth" to Ballymagowan-bridge, where he intended to set up his nephew in the "public line," to the ruin of Nancy's flourishing establishment.

"Father Ned," said Nancy, "I'm a hard-working, honest woman, and I don't see why my substance is to be wasted by your Reverence, when you won't pay for it."

"And do *you* forget," Father Ned would reply, "that it's me that brings you your custom? Don't you know that if I remove my flock to Ballymagowan, you'll soon sing to another tune? so lay that to your heart."

"Troth, I know that whatever I get I'm obliged to pay for it; and I think every man should do the same, Father Ned. *You* must get a hank of yarn from me, and a bushel or two of oats from Ned, and your riglar dues along with all; but, avourneen, it's yourself that won't pay a penny when you can help it."

"Salvation to me, but you'd skin a flint!"

"Well, if I would, I pay my debts first."

"You do?"

"Yes, troth, do I."

"Why then that's more than you'll be able to do long, plase the fates."

"If all my customers wor like your Reverence, it is."

"I'll tell you what it is, Nancy, I often threatened to take the congregation from 'The Forth,' and I'll do it—if I don't, may I never sup sorrow!"

Big with such a threat, Father Ned retired. The apprehensions of Nancy on this point however, were more serious than she was willing to acknowledge. This dispute took place a few days before the night in question.

Father Ned was a little man, with a red face, slender legs, and flat feet; he was usually cased in a pair of ribbed minister's grey small-clothes, with leggings of the same material. His coat, which was much too short, rather resembled a jerkin, and gave him altogether an appearance very much at variance with an idea of personal gravity or reverence

* *Usquebaugh*—literally, "water of life."

Over this dress he wore in winter, a dark great-coat, with high collar, that buttoned across his face, showing only the point of his red nose ; so that, when riding or walking, his hat rested more upon the collar of his coat than upon his head.

The Curate was a tall, raw-boned young man, with high jutting cheek-bones, low forehead, and close knees : to his shoulders, which were very high, hung a pair of long bony arms, whose motions seemed rather the effect of machinery than volition. His hair, which was a bad black, was cropped close, and trimmed across his eyebrows, like that of a methodist preacher ; the smallclothes he wore were of the same web which had produced Father Ned's, and his body-coat was a dark blue, with black buttons. Each wore a pair of grey woollen mittens.

"There, Pether," said Father Ned, as he entered, "hook my bridle along with your own, as your hand is in.—God save all here ! Paddy Smith, ma bouchal, put these horses in the stable, till we dry ourselves a bit,—Father Pether and I."

"Musha, but you're both welcome," said Nancy, wishing to wipe out the effects of the last tift with Father Ned, by the assistance of the stranger's punch : "will ye bounce, ye spalpeens, and let them to the fire ? Father Ned, you're dhreepin' with the rain ; and, Father Pether, avourneen, you're wet to the skin, too."

"Troth, and he is, Nancy, and a little bit farther, if you knew but all. Mr. Morrow, how do you do, Sir ?—And—eh ?—Who's this we've got in the corner ? A gentleman, boys, if cloth can make one ! Mr. Morrow, introduce me."

"Indeed, Father Ned, I havn't the pleasure of knowin' the gentleman myself."

"Well, no matter—come up, Pether. Sir, I have the honour of introducing you to my curate and coadjutor, the Reverend Pether M'Clatch-



aghan, and to myself, his excellent friend, but spiritual superior, the Reverend *Edward Deleery*, Roman Catholic Rector of this highly

respectable and extensive parish ; and I have further the pleasure," he continued, taking up Addy Morrow's Punch, "of drinking your very good health, Sir."

"And I have the honour," returned the stranger, rising up, and driving his head among the flitches of bacon that hung in the chimney, "of introducing you and the Rev. Mr. M'—M'—M'——"

"Clatcheghan, Sir," subjoined Father Ned.

—"Peter M'Ilclatchaghan, to Mr. Longinus Polysyllabus Alexandrinus."

"By my word, Sir, but it's a good and appropriate name, sure enough," said Father Ned, surveying his enormous length: "success to me but you're an Alexandrine from head to foot—*non solum Longinus, sed Alexandrinus.*"

"You're wrong, Sir, in the Latin," said Father Peter.

"Prove it, Pether—prove it."

"It should be *non tantum*, Sir."

"By what rule, Pether?"

"Why, Sir, there's a phrase in Corderius's Colloquies that I could condemn you from, if I had the book."

"Pether, you think you're a scholar, and, to do you justice, you're cute enough sometimes ; but, Pether, you didn't travel for it, as I did—nor were you obliged to lep out of a college windy in Paris, at the time of the French Revolution, for your larning, as I was : not you, man, you ate the king's mutton comfortably at home in Maynooth, instead of travelling for it, like your betters."

"I appale to this gentleman," said Father Peter, turning to the stranger.

"Are you a classical scholar, Sir—that is, do you understand Latin?"

"What kind?" demanded the stranger dryly.

"If you have read Corderius's Colloquies, it will do," said Father Peter.

"No, Sir," replied the other, "but I have read his commentator, *Bar-dolphus*, who wrote a treatise upon the *Nasus Rubicundus* of the ancients."

"Well, Sir, if you did, it's probable that you may be able to understand our dispute, so"——

"Pether, I'm afeard you've got into the wrong box ; for I say he's no chicken that's read *Nasus Rubicundus*, I can tell you that ; I had my own trouble with it : but, at any rate, will you take your punch, man alive, and don't bother us with your Latin?"

"I beg your pardon, Father Ned : I insist that I'm right ; and I'll convince you that you're wrong, if God spares me to see Corderius to-morrow."

"Very well then, Pether, if you're to decide it to-morrow, let us have no more of it to-night."

During this conversation between the two reverend worthies, the group around the fire were utterly astonished at the erudition displayed in this learned dispute.

"Well, to be sure, larnin's a great thing, entirely," said M'Roarkin aside, to Shane Fadh.

"Ah, Tom, there's nothing like it : well, any way, it's wondherful what *they* know!"

"Indeed it is, Shane—and in so short a time, too! Sure it's not more nor five or six years since Father Pether there used to be digging praties on the one ridge with myself—by the same token, an excellent *spadesman* he was—and now he knows more nor all the Protestant parsons in the Dioc'y."

"Why, how could *they* know any thing, when they don't belong to the thrue church?" said Shane.

"Thrue for you, Shane," replied M'Roarkin; "I disremembered that clincher."

This discourse ran parallel with the dispute between the two priests, but in so low a tone as not to reach the ears of the *classical* champions, who would have ill-brooked this eulogium upon Father Peter's agricultural talent.

"Don't bother us, Pether, with your arguing, to-night," said Father Ned, "it's enough for you to be seven days in the week at your disputations.—Sir, I drink to our better acquaintance."

"With all my heart, Sir," replied the stranger.

"Father Ned," said Nancy, "the gintleman was going to tell us a athrow story, Sir, and maybe your Reverence would wish to hear it, docthor?"

"Certainly, Nancy, we'll be very happy to hear any story the gintleman may please to tell us; but, Nancy, achora, before he begins, what if you'd just fry a slice or two of that glorious fitch, hanging over his head, in the corner?—that, and about six eggs, Nancy, and you'll have the priest's blessing, *gratis*."

"Why, Father Ned, it's too fresh, entirely—sure it's not a week hanging yet."

"Sorra matter, Nancy dheelish, we'll take with all that—just try your hand at a slice of it. I rode eighteen miles since I dined, and I feel a craving, Nancy, a *whacuum* in my stomach, that's rather troublesome."

"To be sure, Father Ned, you must get a slice, with all the veins of my heart; but I thought maybe you wouldn't like it so *fresh*: but what on earth will we do for eggs? for there's not an egg under the roof with me."

"Biddy, a hatur," said Father Ned, "just slip out to Molshy Johnston, and tell her to send me six eggs for a rasher, by the same token that I heard two or three hens cackling in the byre, as I was going to conference this morning."

"Well, Docthor," said Pat Frayne, when Biddy had been gone some time, on which embassy she delayed longer than the priest's judgment, influenced by the cravings of his stomach, calculated to be necessary,—"Well, Docthor, I often pity you, for fasting so long; I'm sure, I dunna how you can stand it, at all, at all."

"Troth, and you may well wonder, Pat; but we have *that* to support us, that you, or any one like you, know nothing about—inward support, Pat—inward support."

"Only for that, Father Ned," said Shane Fadh, "I suppose you could never get through with it."

"Very right, Shane—very right: only for it, we never could do.—What the dickens is keeping this girl with the eggs?—why she might be at Mr. Morrow's, here, since. By the way, Mr. Morrow," he continued

lauguing, "you must come over to our church; you're a good neighbour, and a worthy fellow, and it's a thousand pities you should be sent down."

"Why, Docthor," said Andy, "do you really believe I'll go downwards?"

"Ah, Mr. Morrow, don't ask me that question—out of the pale, you know—out of the pale."

"Then you think, Sir, there's no chance for me, at all?" said Andy, smiling.

"Not the laste, Andy, you must go this way," said Father Ned, striking the floor with the butt end of his whip, and winking—"to the lower ragions; and, upon my knowledge, to tell you the truth, I'm sorry for it, for you're a worthy fellow."

"Ah, Docthor," said Ned, "it's a great thing entirely to be born in the true church—one's always sure, then."

"Ay, ay; you may say that, Ned," returned the priest, "come or go what will, a man's always safe at the long run, except he dies without his clargy.—Shane, hand me the jug, if you please.—Where did you get this stuff, Nancy?—faith, it's excellent."

"You forget, Father Ned, that that's a secret.—But here's Biddy with the eggs, and now you'll have your rasher in no time."

When the two clergymen had discussed the rashers and eggs, and while the happy group were making themselves intimately acquainted with a fresh jug of punch, as it circulated round the table—

"Now, Sir," said Father Ned to the stranger, "we'll hear your story with the greatest satisfaction possible; but I think you might charge your tumbler before you set to it."

When the stranger had complied with this last hint, "Well, gentlemen," said he, "as I am rather fatigued, will you excuse me for the position I am about to occupy, which is simply to stretch myself along the hob here, with my head upon the straw hassock? and if you have no objection to that, I will relate the story."

To this, of course, a general assent was given. When he was stretched completely at his ease—

"Well, upon my veracity," observed Father Peter, "the gentleman's supernat'rally long."

"Yes, Pether," replied Father Ned, "but observe his position—*Poly-syllaba cuncta supina*, as Prosody says.—Arrah, salvation to me, but you're dull man, afther all!—but we're interrupting the gentleman. Sir, go on, if you please, with your story."

"Give me a few minutes," said he, "until I recollect the particulars."

He accordingly continued quiescent for two or three minutes more, apparently arranging the materials of his intended narration, and then commenced to gratify the eager expectations of his auditory, by emitting those nasal enunciations which are the usual accompaniments of sleep!

"Why, bad luck to the morsel of 'im but's asleep," said Ned; "Lord pardon me for swearin' in your Reverence's presence."

"That's certainly the language of a sleeping man," replied Father Ned "but there might have been a little more respect than all that snoring comes to. Your health, boys."

The stranger had now wound up his nasal organ to a high pitch, after which he commenced again with somewhat of a lower and finer tone.

"He's beginning a new paragraph," observed Father Peter, with a smile at the joke.

"Not at all," said Father Ned, "he's turning the tune; don't you perceive that he's snoring God save the king, in the key of *bass relieve*?"

"I'm no judge of instrumental music, as you are," said the curate, "but I think it's liker the 'Dead march' of Saul,' than 'God save the King;' however, if you be right, the gentleman certainly snores in a truly loyal strain."

"That," said little M'Roarkin, "is liker the Swine's melody, or the Bedfordshire hornpipe—he—he—he!"

"The poor gentleman's tired," observed Nancy, "after a hard day's thravelling."

"I dare say he is," said Father Ned, in the sincere hospitality of his country; "at all events, take care of him, Nancy, he's a stranger, and get the best supper you can for him—he appears to be a truly respectable and well-bred man."

"I think," said M'Kinley, with a comical grin, "you might know that by his high-flown manner of sleeping—he snores very politely, and like a gentleman, all out."

"Well done, Alick," said the priest, laughing; "go home, boys, it's near bed-time; Paddy, ma bouchal, are the horses ready?"

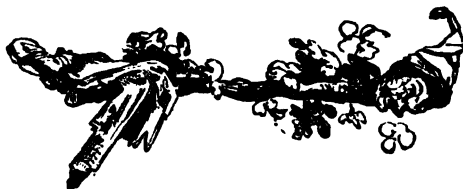
"They'll be at the door in a jiffey, your Reverence," said Paddy going out.

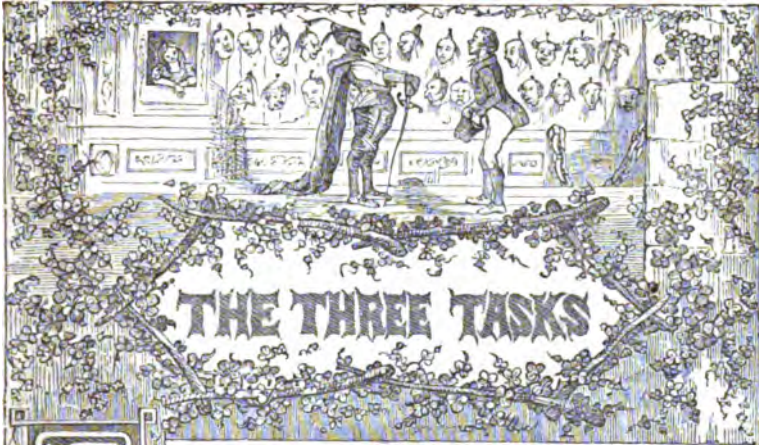
In the course of a few minutes, he returned, exclaiming, "Why, thin, is it thinkin' to venthur out sich a night as it's comin' on yer Reverences would be? and it plashin' as if it came out of methers! Sure the life would be dhrondred out of both of ye, and yees might *catch* a faver into the bargain."

"Sit down, gentlemen," said Ned; "sit down, Father Ned, you and Father Pether—we'll have another tumbler; and, as it's my turn to tell a story, I'll give yez something to amuse yez,—the best I can, and, you all know, who can do more?"

"Very right, Ned; but let us see"—replied Father Ned, putting his head out of the door, to ascertain what the night did; "Come, Pether, it's good to be on the safe side of any house in such a storm; we must only content ourselves till it gets fair. Now, Ned, go on with your story, and let it be as pleasant as possible."

"Never fear, your Reverence," replied Ned—"here goes—and healths a-piece, to begin with."





VERY person in the parish knows the purty knoll that rises above the Routing Burn, some few miles from the renowned town of Knockimdowny, which, as all the world must allow, wants only houses and inhabitants to be as big a place as the great town of

Dublin itself. At the foot of this little hill, just under the shelter of a dacent pebble of a rock, something about the bulk of half a dozen churches, one would be apt to see—if they knew how to look sharp, otherwise they mightn't be able to make it out from the grey rock above it, except by the smoke that *ris* from the chimbley—Nancy Magennis's little cabin, snug and cosey with its corrag*, or *ould man* of branches, standing on the windy side of the door, to keep away the blast.

“Upon my word, it was a dacent little residence in its own way, and so was Nancy herself, for that mather; for, though a poor *widdy*, she was very *punctwell* in paying for Jack's schooling, as I often heard ould Terry M'Phaudeen say, who told me the story. Jack, indeed, grew up a fine slip; and for hurling, foot-ball playing, and lepping, hadn't his likes in the five quarters of the parish. It's he that knew how to handle a spade and a raping-hook, and what was better nor all that, he was kind and kindher to his poor ould mother, and would let her want for nothing. Before he'd go to his day's work in the morning, he'd be sure to bring home from the clear-spring well that ran out of the other side of the rock, a pitcher of water to serve her for the day; nor would he forget to bring in a good creel of turf from the snug little peat-stack that stood thatched with rushes before the door, and leave it in the corner, beside the fire; so

* The *Corrag* is a roll of branches tied together when green, and used for the purposes mentioned in the story. It is six feet high, and much thicker than a sack, and is changed to either side of the door according to the direction from which the wind blows.

that she had nothing to do but put over her hand, without rising off of her sate, and put down a sod when she wanted it.

"Nancy, on her part, kept Jack very clane and comfortable; his linen, though coorse, was always a good colour, his working clothes tidily mended at all times; and when he'd have occasion to put on his good coat to work in for the first time, Nancy would sew on the fore-part of each sleeve astout patch of ould cloth, to keep them from being worn by the spade; so that when she'd rip these off them every Saturday night, they would look as new and fresh as if he hadn't been working in them at all, at all.

"Then when Jack came home in the winter nights, it would do your heart good to see Nancy sitting at her wheel, singing '*Siachan Varagah*,' or '*Peggy Na Laveen*,' beside a purty clear fire, with a small pot of *murphys* boiling on it for their supper, or laid up in a wooden dish, comfortably covered with a clane praskeen on the well-swept hearth-stone; whilst the quiet, dancing blaze might be seen blinking in the nice earthen plates and dishes, that stood over against the side-wall of the house. Just before the fire you might see Jack's stool waiting for him to come home; and on the other side, the brown cat washing her face with her paws, or sitting beside the dog that lay asleep, quite happy and contented, purring her song, and now and then looking over at Nancy, with her eyes half-shut, as much as to say, 'Catch a happier pair nor we are, Nancy, if you can.'

"Sitting quietly on the roost above the door, were Dicky the cock, and half-a-dozen hens, that kept this honest pair in eggs and *egg-milk* for the best part of the year, besides enabling Nancy to sell two or three clutches of March-birds every season, to help to buy wool for Jack's big-coat, and her own grey-beard gown and striped red-and-blue petticoat.

"To make a long story short—No two could be more comfortable, considering every thing. But, indeed, Jack was always obsarved to have a dacent ginteel turn with him: for he'd scorn to see a bad gown on his mother, or a broken Sunday coat on himself; and instead of drinking his little earning in a sheeben-house, and then eating his praties dry, he'd take care to have something to *kitchen** them; so that he was not only snug and dacent of a Sunday, regarding wearables, but so well-fed and rosy, that the point of a rush would take a drop of blood out of his cheek †. Then he was the comeliest and best-looking young man in the parish,

* The straits to which the poor Irish are put for what is termed *kitchen*—that is some liquid that enables them to dilute and swallow the dry potato—are grievous to think of. An Irishman in his miserable cabin will often feel glad to have salt and water in which to dip it, but that alluded to in the text is absolute comfort. Egg milk is made as follows:—A measure of water is put down suited to the number of the family; the poor woman then takes the proper number of eggs, which she beats up, and, when the water is boiling, pours it in, stirring it well for a couple of minutes. It is then made, and handed round in wooden noggins, every one salting for themselves. In colour it resembles milk, which accounts for its name.

Our readers must have heard of the old and well-known luxury of "potatoes and point," which, humorous as it is, scarcely falls short of the truth. An Irish family, of the cabin class, hangs up in the chimney a herring, or "small taste" of bacon, and as the national imagination is said to be strong, each individual points the potato, he is going to eat, at it, upon the principle, I suppose, of *crede et habes*. It is generally said that the act communicates the flavour of the herring or bacon, as the case may be, to the potato; and this is called "potatoes and point."

† This proverb, which is always used as above, but without being confined in its application to only one sex, is a general one in Ireland. In delicacy and beauty I think it inimitable.

could tell lots of droll stories, and sing scores of merry songs that would make you split your sides with downright laughing; and when a wake or a dance would happen to be in the neighbourhood, maybe there wouldn't be many a sly look out from the purty girls for pleasant Jack Magennis!

"In this way lived Jack and his mother, as happy and contented as two lords; except now and then, that Jack would feel a little consarn for not being able to lay past anything for the *sore foot**, or that might enable him to think of marrying—for he was beginning to look about him for a wife; and why not, to be sure? But he was prudent for all that, and didn't wish to bring a wife and small family into poverty and hardship without means to support them, as too many do.

"It was one fine, frosty, moonlight night—the sky was without a cloud, and the stars all blinking that it would delight any body's heart to look at them, when Jack was crassing a bog that lay a few fields beyant his own cabin. He was just crooning the '*Humours of Glynn*' to himself, and thinking that it was a very hard case that he couldn't save anything at all, at all, to help him to the wife, when, on coming down a bank in the middle of the bog, he saw a dark-looking man leaning against a clamp of turf, and a black dog, with a pipe of tobacky in his mouth, sitting at his ase beside him, and he smoking as sober as a judge. Jack, however, had a stout heart, bekase his conscience was clear, and, barring being a little daunted, he wasn't very much afeard. 'Who is this coming down towardst us?' said the black-favoured man, as he saw Jack approaching them. 'It's Jack Magennis,' says the dog, making answer, and taking the pipe out of his mouth with his right paw; and after puffing away the smoke, and rubbing the end of it against his left leg, exactly as a Christian (this day's Friday, the Lord stand betune us and harm) would do against his sleeve, giving it at the same time to his comrade—'It's Jack Magennis,' says the dog, 'honest Widow Magennis's dacent son.' 'The very man,' says the other, back to him, 'that I'd wish to sarve out of a thousand. Arrah, Jack Magennis, how is every tether-length of you?' says the old fellow, putting the *furraun* † on him—'and how is every bone in your body, Jack, my darling? I'll hould a thousand guineas,' says he, pointing to a great big bag that lay beside him, 'and that's only the tenth part of what's in this bag, Jack, that you're just going to be in luck to-night above all the nights in the year.'

"'And may worse never happen you, Jack, my bouchal,' says the dog, putting in *his* tongue, then wagging his tail, and *houlding* out his paw to shake hands with Jack.

"'Gintlemen,' says Jack, never minding to give the dog his hand, bekase he heard it wasn't safe to touch the likes of him—'Gintlemen,' says he, 'ye're sitting far from the fire this frosty night.'

"'Why, that 's true, Jack,' answers the ould fellow; 'but if we 're sitting far from the fire, we 're sitting very near the makins of it, man alive.' So, with this, he pulls the bag of goold over to him, that Jack might know, by the jingle of the shiners, what was in it.

* Accidents—future calamity—or old age.

† That frank, cordial manner of address which brings strangers suddenly to intimacy.

“ ‘Jack,’ says dark-face, ‘there’s some born with a silver ladle in their mouth, and others with a wooden spoon; and if you’ll just sit down on the one end of this clamp with me, and take a hand at the *five and ten*,’ pulling out, as he spoke, a *deck* of cards, ‘you may be a made man for the remainder of your life.’

“ ‘Sir,’ says Jack, ‘with submission, both yourself and this cur—I mane,’ says he, not wishing to give the dog office, ‘both yourself and this dacent gentleman with the tail and claws upon him, have the advantage of me, in respect of knowing my name; for, if I don’t mistake,’ says he, putting his hand to his caubeen, ‘I never had the pleasure of seeing either of ye before.’

“ ‘Never mind that,’ says the dog, taking back the pipe from the other, and clapping it in his mouth; ‘we’re both your well-wishers, any how, and it’s now your own fault if you’re not a rich man.’

“ Jack, by this time, was beginning to think that they might be aafter wishing to throw luck in his way; for he had often heard of men being made up entirely by the fairies, till there was no end to their wealth.

“ ‘Jack,’ says the black man, ‘you had better be led by us for this bout—upon the honour of a gentleman we wish you well: however, if you don’t choose to take the ball at the right hop, another may; and you’re welcome to toil all your life, and die a beggar after.’

“ ‘Upon my reputation, what he says is true, Jack,’ says the dog, in his turn; ‘the lucky minute of your life is come: let it pass without doing what them that wishes your mother’s son well desire you, and you’ll die in a ditch.’

“ ‘And what am I to do,’ says Jack, ‘that’s to make me so rich all of a sudden?’

“ ‘Why only to sit down, and take a game of cards with myself,’ says black-brow, ‘that’s all, and I’m sure it’s not much.’

“ ‘And what is it to be for?’ Jack inquires; ‘for I have no money—tare-nation to the rap itself’s in my company.’

“ ‘Well, you have yourself,’ says the dog, putting up his fore-claw along his nose, and winking at Jack; ‘you have yourself, man—don’t be faint-hearted: he’ll bet the contents of this bag;’ and with that the ould thief gave it another great big shake, to make the guineas jingle again. ‘It’s ten thousand guineas in hard goold; if he wins, you’re to sarve him for a year and a day; and if he loses, you’re to have the bag.’

“ ‘And the money that’s in it?’ says Jack, wishing, you see, to make a sure bargain, any how.

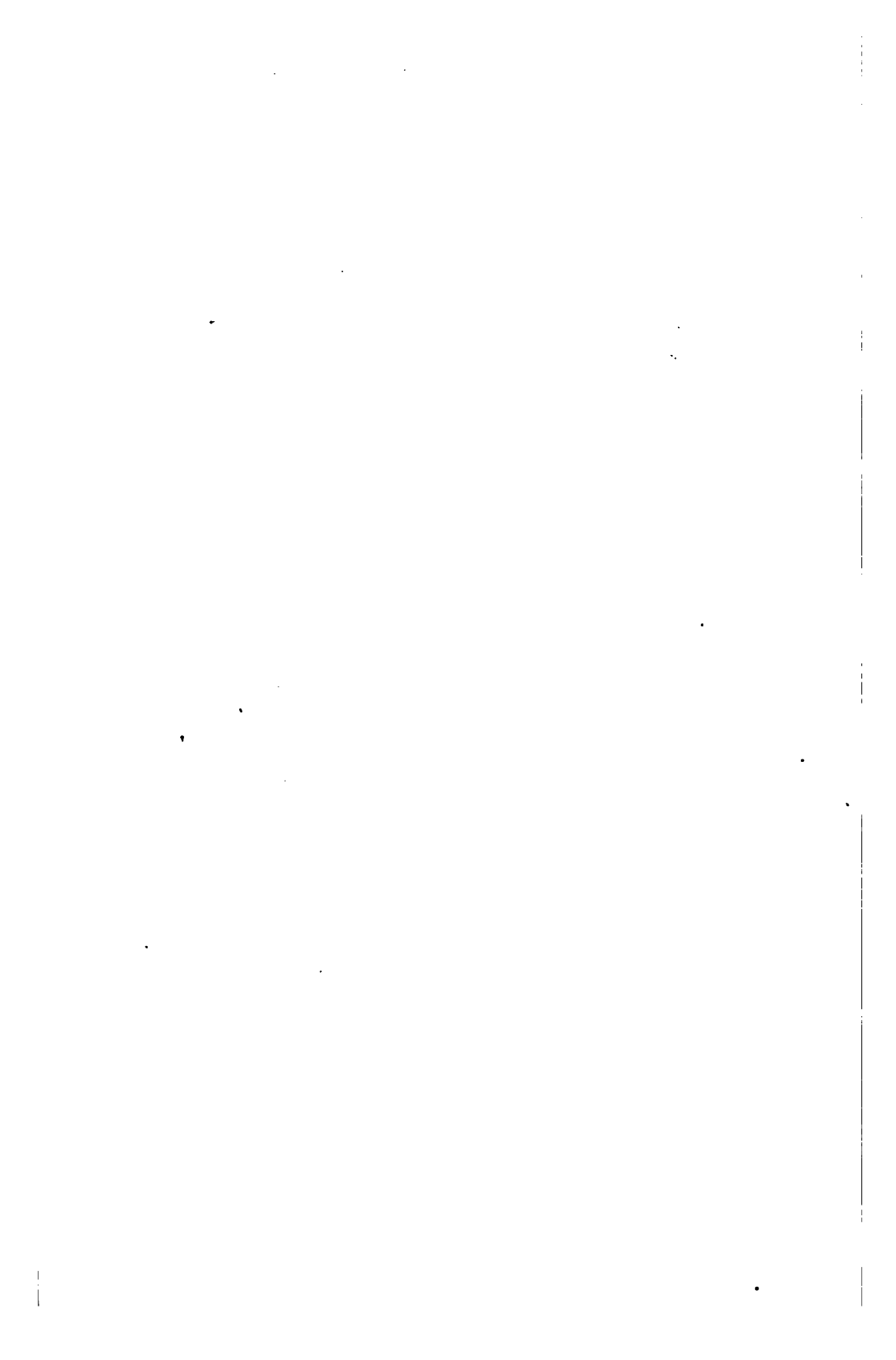
“ ‘Ev’ry penny,’ answered the ould chap, ‘if you win it; and there’s fifty to one in your favour.’

“ By this time the dog had got into a great fit of laughing at Jack’s sharpness about the money. ‘The money that’s in it, Jack!’ says he; and he took the pipe out of his mouth, and laughed till he brought on a hard fit of coughing. ‘O, by this and by that,’ says he, ‘but that bates Bannagher! And you’re to get ev’ry penny, you thief o’ the world, if you win it!’ but for all that he seemed to be laughing at something that Jack wasn’t up to.



Don Mademoiselle playing at "Five and Ten" with the "Banz" (a King's gentleman).

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"At any rate, surely, they palavered Jack betune them until he sot down and consinted. 'Well,' says he, scratching his head, 'why, worse nor lose I can't, so here goes for one trial at the shiners, any how!

"'Now,' says the obscure gintleman, just whin the first card was in his hand, ready to be laid down, 'you're to sarve me for a year and a day, if I win; and if I lose, you shall have all the money in the bag."

"'Exactly,' says Jack, and, just as he said the word, he saw the dog putting the pipe in his pocket, and turning his head away, for fraid Jack would see him breaking his sides laughing. At last, when he got his face sobered, he looks at Jack, and says, 'Surely, Jack, if you win, you must get all the money in the bag; and, upon my reputation, you may build castles in the air with it, you'll be so rich.'

"This plucked up Jack's courage a little, and to work they went; but how could it end otherwise than Jack to lose betune two such knowing schamers as they soon turned out to be? For, what do you think? but, as Jack was beginning the game, the dog tips him a wink—laying his fore-claw along his nose as before, as much as to say, 'Watch me, and you'll win'—turning round, at the same time, and showing Jack a nate little looking-glass, that was set in his oxther, in which Jack saw, dark as it was, the spots of all the other fellow's cards, as he thought, so that he was cock-sure of bating him. But they were a pair of down-right knaves; any how; for Jack, by playing to the cards that he saw in the looking-glass instead of to them the other held in his hand, lost the game and the money. In short, he saw that he was bliarried and chated by them both; and when the game was up, he plainly tould them as much.

"'What?—you scoundrel!' says the black fellow, starting up and catching him by the collar; 'dare you go for to impache my honour?

"'Leather him, if he says a word,' says the dog, running over on his hind-legs, and laying his shut paw upon Jack's nose. 'Say another word, you rascal!' says he, 'and I'll *down* you;' with this, the ould fellow gives him another shake.

"'I don't blame *you* so much,' says Jack to him; 'it was the looking-glass that desaved me. That cur's nothing but a *black-leg*!'

"'What looking-glass?—you knave you!' says dark-face, giving him a fresh haul.

"'Why, the one I saw under the dog's oxther,' replied Jack.

"'Under my oxther, you swindling rascal!' replied the dog, giving him a pull by the other side of the collar; 'did ever any honest pair of gintlemen hear the like?—but he only wants to break through the agreement: so let us turn him at once into an ass, and then he'll brake no more bargains, nor strive to take in honest men and win their money. Me a black-leg!' So the dark fellow drew his two hands over Jack's jaws, and in a twinkling there was a pair of ass's ears growing up out of his head. When Jack found this, he knew that he wasn't in good hands; so he thought it best to get himself as well out of the scrape as possible.

"'Gintlemen, be aisy,' says he, 'and let us understand one another: I'm very willing to sarve you for a year and a day; but I've one requist

to ax, and it's this: I've a helpless ould mother at home, and if I go with you now, she'll break her heart with grief first, and starve afterwards. Now, if your honour will give me a year to work hard, and lay in provision to support her while I'm away, I'll serve you with all the veins of my heart—for a bargain's a bargain.'

"With this, the dog gave his companion a pluck by the skirt, and, after some chat together, that Jack didn't hear, they came back and said that they would comply with his wishes that far: 'So, on to-morrow twelvemonth, Jack,' says the dark fellow, 'the dog here will come to your mother's, and if you follow him he'll bring you safe to my castle.'

"'Very well, your honour,' says Jack; 'but as dogs resemble one another so much, how will I know him whin he comes?'

"'Why,' answers the other, 'he'll have a green ribbon and a spy-glass about his neck, and a pair of Wellington boots on his hind legs.'

"'That's enough, Sir,' says Jack, 'I can't mistake him in that dress, so I'll be ready; but, jintlemen, if it would be plasing to you both, I'd every bit as soon not go home with these,' and he handled the brave pair of ears he had got, as he spoke. 'The truth is, jintlemen, I'm deluding enough without them; and as I'm so modest, you persave, why if you'd take them away, you'd oblige me!'

"To this they had no objection, and during that year Jack wrought night and day, that he might be able to lave as much provision with his poor mother as would support her in his absence; and when the morning came that he was to bid her farewell, he went down on his two knees and got her blessing. He then left her with tears in his eyes, and promised to come back the very minute his time would be up. 'Mother,' says he, 'be kind to your little family here, and feed them well, as they are all you'll have to keep you company till you see me again.'

"His mother then stuffed his pockets with bread, till they stuck out behind him, and gave him a crooked six-pence for luck; after which, he got his staff, and was just ready to tramp, when, sure enough, he spies his ould friend the dog, with the green ribbon about his neck, and the Wellington boots upon his hind legs. He didn't go in, but waited on the outside till Jack came out. They then set off, but no one knows how far they travelled, till they reached the dark gentleman's castle, who appeared very glad to see Jack, and gave him a hearty welcome.

"The next day, in consequence of his long journey, he was ax'd to do nothing; but in the coorse of the evening, the dark chap brought him into a long, frightful room, where there were three hundred and sixty-five hooks sticking out of the wall, and on every hook but one, a man's head. When Jack saw this agreeable sight, his dinner began to quake within him; but he felt himself still worse, when his master pointed to the empty hook, saying, 'Now, Jack, your business to morrow is to clane out a stable that wasn't claned for the last seven years, and if you don't have it finished before dusk—do you see that hook?'

"'Ye—yes;' replied Jack, hardly able to spake. 'Well, if you don't have it finished before dusk, your head will be hanging on that hook as soon as the sun sets.'

"'Very well, your honour,' replied Jack; scarcely knowing what he

said, or he wouldn't have said 'very well' to such a bloody-minded intention, any how—'Very well,' says he, 'I'll do my best, and all the world knows that the best can do no more.'

"Whilst this discourse was passing betune them, Jack happened to look at the upper end of the room, and there he saw one of the beautiful faces that ever was seen on a woman, looking at him through a little pannel that was in the wall. She had a white, snowy forehead—such eyes, and cheeks, and teeth, that there's no coming up to them; and the clusters of dark hair that hung about her beautiful temples!—by the laws, I'm afeard of falling in love with her myself, so I'll say no more about her, only that she would charm the heart of a wheel-barrow. At any rate, in spite of all the ould fellow could say—heads and hooks, and all, Jack couldn't help throwing an eye, now and then, to the pannel; and to tell the truth, if he had been born to riches and honour, it would be hard to fellow him, for a good face and a good figure.

"'Now, Jack,' says his master, 'go, and get your supper, and I hope you'll be able to perform your task—if not, off goes your head.'

"'Very well, your honour,' says Jack, again scratching it in the hoith of perplexity, 'I must only do what I can.'

"The next morning Jack was up with the sun, if not before him, and hard at his task; but before breakfast time he lost all heart, and little wonder he should, poor fellow, bekase for every one shovel-full he'd throw out, there would come three more in: so that instead of making his task less, according as he got on, it became greater. He was now in the greatest dilemmy, and didn't know how to manage, so he was driven at last to such an amplush, that he had no other shift for employment, only to sing *Paddoen O'Rafferty* out of mere vexation, and dance the hornpipe trebling step to it, cracking his fingers, half mad, through the stable. Just in the middle of this tantrum, who comes to the door to call him to his breakfast, but the beautiful crathur he saw the evening before peeping at him through the pannel. At this minute, Jack had so hated himself by the dancing, that his handsome face was in a fine glow, entirely.

"'I think,' said she to Jack, with one of her own sweet smiles, 'that this is an odd way of performing your task.'

"'Och, thin, 'tis you that may say that,' replies Jack; 'but it's myself that's willing to have my head hung up any day, just for one sight of you, you darling.'

"'Where did you come from?' asked the lady, with another smile that bate the first all to nothing.

"'Where did I come from, is it?' answered Jack; 'why, death-alive! did you never hear of ould Ireland, my jewel!—hem—I mane, please your ladyship's honour.'

"'No,' she answered; 'where is that country?'

"'Och, by the honour of an Irishman,' says Jack, 'that takes the shine!—not heard of Erin—the Imerald Isle—the Jim of the ocean, where all the men are brave and honourable, and all the women—hem—I mane the ladies—chaste and beautiful?'

"'No,' said she; 'not a word: but if I stay longer I may get you blame—come in to your breakfast, and I'm sorry to find that you have

done so little at your task. Your master's a man that always acts up to what he threatens: and, if you have not this stable cleared out before dusk, your head will be taken off your shoulders this night.'

"'Why, thin,' says Jack, 'my beautiful darl—plase your honour's ladyship—if he hangs it up, will you do me the favour, *acushla machree*, to turn my head *toardst* that same pannel where I saw a sartin fair face that I wont mintion: and if you do, let me alone for watching a sartin purty face I'm acquainted with.'

"'What means *cushla machree*?' inquired the lady, as she turned to go away.'

"'It manes that you're the pulse of my heart, avourneen, plase your ladyship's Reverence,' says Jack.

"'Well,' said the lovely crathur, 'any time you speak to me in future, I would rather you would omit terms of honour, and just call me after the manner of your own country; instead, for instance, of calling me your ladyship, I would be better pleased if you called me *cushla*—something—' '*Cushla machree, ma vourneen*—the pulse of my heart—my darling,' said Jack, consthering it (the thief) for her, for fraid she wouldn't know it well enough.

"'Yes,' she replied, '*cushla machree*; well, as I can pronounce it, *acushla machree*, will you come in to your breakfast?' said the darling, giving Jack a smile that would be enough, any day, to do up the heart of an Irishman. Jack, accordingly, went after her, thinking of nothing except herself; but on going in he could see no sign of her, so he sat down to his breakfast, though a single ounce, barring a couple of pounds of beef, the poor fellow couldn't ate, at that bout, for thinking of her.

"'Well, he went again to his work, and thought he'd have better luck; but it was still the ould game—three shovel-fulls would come in for ev'ry one he'd throw out; and now he began, in earnest, to feel something about his heart that he didn't like, bekase he couldn't, for the life of him, help thinking of the three hundred and sixty-four heads and the empty hook. At last he gave up the work entirely, and took it into his head to *make himself scarce* from about the ould fellow's castle, altogether; and without more to do, he set off, never saying as much as 'good bye' to his master: but he hadn't got as far as the lower end of the yard, when his ould friend, the dog, steps out of a kennel, and meets him full but in the teeth.

"'So, Jack,' says he, 'you're going to give us leg bail, I see; but walk back with yourself, you spalpeen, this minute, and join your work, or if you don't,' says he, 'it'll be worse for your health. I'm not so much your enemy now as I was, bekase you have a friend in coort that you know nothing about; so just do whatever you are bid, and keep never minding.'

"'Jack went back with a heavy heart, as you may be sure, knowing that, whenever the black cur began to blarney him, there was no good to come in his way. He accordingly went into the stable, but consuming to the hand's turn he did, knowing it would be only useless; for, instead of clearing it out, he'd be only filling it.

"'It was now near dinner-time, and Jack was very ead and sorrowful,

as how could he be otherwise, poor fellow, with such a bloody-minded ould chap to dale with? when up comes the darling of the world again, to call him to his dinner.

“ ‘Well Jack,’ says she, with her white arms so beautiful, and her dark clusters tossed about by the motion of her walk—‘how are you coming on at your task?’ ‘How am I coming on, is it? Och, thin,’ says Jack, giving a good-humoured smile through the frown that was on his face, ‘plase your lady—a *cushla machree*—it’s all over with me; for I’ve still the same story to tell, and off goes my head, as sure as it’s on my shouldera, this blessed night.’

“ ‘That would be a pity, Jack,’ says she, ‘for there are worse heads on worse shouldera; but will you give *me* the shovel?’ ‘Will I give *you* the shovel, is it?—Och, thin, wouldn’t I be a right big baste to do the likes of that, any how?’ says Jack; ‘what! *avourneen dheelish!* to stand up with myself, and let this hard shovel into them beautiful, soft, white hands of your own! *Faix*, my jewel, if you knew but all, my mother’s son’s not the man to do such a disgraceful turn, as to let a lady like you take the shovel out of his hand, and he standing with his mouth under his nose, looking at you—not myself *avourneen!* we have no such ungenteel manners as that in *our* country.’ ‘Take my advice, Jack,’ says she, pleased in her heart at what Jack said, for all she didn’t purtend it—‘give me the shovel, and depend upon it, I’ll do more in a short time to clear the stable than you would for years.’ ‘Why, thin, *avourneen*, it goes to my heart to refuse you; but, for all that, may I never see yesterday, if a taste of it will go into your purty, white fingers,’ says the thief, praising her to her face all the time—‘my head may go off, any day, and welcome, but death before dishonour. Say no more, darling; but tell your father I’ll be in to my dinner immediately.’

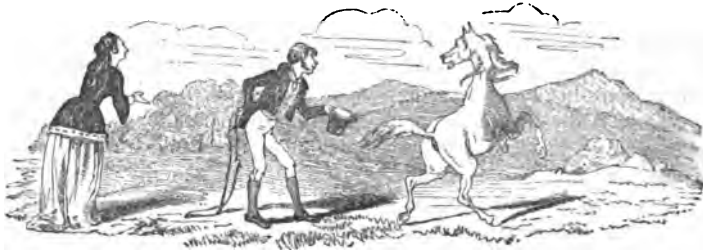
“Notwithstanding all this, by jingo the lady would not be put off; like a ra-al woman, she’d have her own way, so on telling Jack that she didn’t intend to work with the shovel, at all, at all, but only to take it for a minute in her hand, at long last he gave it to her; she then struck it three times on the threshel of the door, and, giving it back into his hand, tould him to try what he could do. Well, sure enough, now there was a change; for, instead of three shovel-fulls coming in, as before, when he threw one out, there went nine more along with it. Jack, in coorse, couldn’t do less than thank the lovely crather for her assistance; but when he raised his head to speak to her, she was gone. I needn’t say, howsomever, that he went in to his dinner with a light heart and a murdering appetite; and when the ould fellow axed him how he was coming on, Jack tould him he was doing gloriously. ‘Remember the empty hook, Jack,’ said he. ‘Never fear, your honour,’ answered Jack, ‘if I don’t finish my task, you may bob my head off any time.’

“Jack now went out, and was a short time getting through his job, for, before the sun set it was finished, and he came into the kitchen, ate nis supper, and, sitting down before the fire, sung ‘Love among the Roses,’ and the ‘Black Joke,’ to vex the ould fellow.

“This was one task over, and his head was safe for that bout; but that night, before he went to bod, his master called him up stairs, brought

him into the bloody room, and gave him his orders for the next day. 'Jack,' says he, 'I have a wild filly that has never been caught, and you must go to my demesne to-morrow, and catch her, or if you don't—look there,' says the big blackguard, 'on that hook it hangs, before to-morrow, if you havn't her at sunset in the stable that you claned yesterday.' 'Very well, your honour,' said Jack, carelessly, 'I'll do every thing in my power, and if I fail, I can't help it.'

"The next morning, Jack was out with a bridle in his hand, going to catch the filly. As soon as he got into the domain, sure enough, there she was in the middle of a green field, grazing quite at her ase. When Jack saw this he went over towards her, houlding out his hat as if it was full of oats; but he kept the hand that had the bridle in it behind his



back, for fraid she'd see it and make off. Well, my dear, on he went till he was almost within grip of her, cock sure that he had nothing more to do than slip the bridle over her neck and secure her; but he made a bit of a mistake in his reckoning, for though she smelt and snoaked about him, just as if she didn't care a feed of oats whether he caught her or not, yet when he boulded over to hould her fast, she was off like a shot, with her tail cocked, to the far end of the demesne, and Jack had to set off hot foot after her. All, however, was to no purpose; he couldn't come next or near her for the rest of the day, and there she kept coorsing him about from one field to another, till he hadn't a blast of breath in his body.

"In this state was Jack when the beautiful crathur came out to call him home to his breakfast, walking with the pretty small feet and light steps of her own upon the green fields, so bright and beautiful, scarcely bending the flowers and the grass as she went along, the darling.

"'Jack,' says she, 'I fear you have as difficult a task to-day as you had yesterday.'

"'Why, and it's you that may say that with your own purty mouth,' says Jack, says he; for out of breath and all as he was, he couldn't help giving her a bit of blarney, the rogue.

"'Well, Jack,' says she, 'take my advice, and don't tire yourself any longer by attempting to catch her; truth's best—I tell you, you could never do it; come home to your breakfast, and when you return again, just amuse yourself as well as you can until dinner-time.'

"'Och, och!' says Jack, striving to look, the sly thief, as if she had promised to help him—'I only wish I was a king, and, by the powers, I know who would be my queen, any how; for it's your own sweet lady

—*savourneen dheelish*—I say, amn't I bound to you for a year and a day longer, for promising to give me a lift, as well as for what you done yesterday?'

" 'Take care, Jack,' says she, smiling, however, at his ingenuity in striving to trap her into a promise, 'I don't think I made any promise of assistance.'

" 'You didn't?' says Jack, wiping his face with the skirt of his coat, 'cause why?—you see pocket-handkerchiefs weren't invented in them times: 'why, thin, may I never live to see yesterday, if there's not as much rale beauty in that smile that's divarting itself about them sweet-breathing lips of yours, and in them two eyes of light that's breaking both their hearts laughing at me, this minute, as would encourage any poor fellow to expect a good turn from you—that is, whin you could do it, without hurting or harming yourself; for it's he would be the right rascal that could take it, if it would injure a silken hair of your head.'

" 'Well,' said the lady, with a mighty roguish smile, 'I shall call you home to your dinner, at all events.'

" When Jack went back from his breakfast, he didn't slave himself after the filly any more, but walked about to view the demesne, and the avenues, and the green walks, and nice temples, and fish-ponds, and rookeries, and every thing, in short, that was worth seeing. Towards dinner-time, however, he began to have an eye to the way the sweet crathur was to come, and sure enough it's she that wasn't one minute late.

" 'Well, Jack,' says she, 'I'll keep you no longer in doubt: for the tender-hearted crathur saw that Jack, although he didn't wish to let an to her, was fretting every now and then about the odd hook and the bloody room—'So, Jack,' says she, 'although I didn't promise, yet I'll perform; and with that she pulled a small ivory whistle out of her pocket, and gave three blasts on it that brought the wild filly up to her very hand, as quick as the wind. She then took the bridle, and threw it over the baste's neck, giving her up, at the same time, to Jack. 'You needn't fear now, Jack,' says she, 'you'll find her as quiet as a lamb, and as tame as you wish; as proof of it, just walk before her, and you will see she will follow you to any part of the field.'

" Jack, you may be sure, paid her as many and as sweet compliments as he could, and never heed one from his country for being able to say something toothsome to the ladies. At any rate, if he laid it on thick the day before, he gave two or three additional coats this time, and the innocent soul went away smiling, as usual.

" When Jack brought the filly home, the dark fellow, his master, if dark before, was a perfect tunder-cloud this night: bedad, he was nothing less than near bursting with vexation, becase the thieving ould sinner intended to have Jack's head upon the hook, but he fell short in his reckoning now as well as before. Jack sung 'Love among the Roses,' and the 'Black Joke,' to help him into better timper.

" 'Jack,' says he, striving to make himself speak pleasant to him, 'you've got two difficult tasks over you; but you know the third time's the charm—take care of the next.'

“ ‘No matter about that,’ says Jack, speaking up to him stiff and stout; bekase, as the dog tould him, he knew he had a friend in coort—‘let’s hear what it is, any how.’

“ ‘To-morrow, then,’ says the other, ‘you’re to rob a crane’s nest, on the top of a beech-tree which grows in the middle of a little island in the lake that you saw yesterday, in my demeane; you’re to have neither boat, nor oar, nor any kind of conveyance, but just as you stand; and if you fail to bring me the eggs, or if you break one of them,—look here!’ says he, again pointing to the odd hook, for all this discoorse took place in the bloody room.

“ ‘Good again,’ says Jack; ‘if I fail, I know my doom.’

“ ‘No, you don’t, you spalpeen,’ says the other, getting vexed with him entirely, ‘for I’ll roast you till you’re half dead, and ate my dinner off you after; and, what is more than that, you blackguard, you must sing the ‘Black Joke,’ all the time, for my amusement.’

“ ‘Div’l fly away with you,’ thought Jack, ‘but you’re fond of music, you vagabond.’

“The next morning Jack was going round and round the lake, trying about the edge of it, if he could find any place shallow enough to wade in; but he might as well go to wade the *say*, and what was worst of all, if he attempted to swim, it would be like a tailor’s goose, straight to the bottom; so he kept himself safe on dry land, still expecting a visit from the ‘lovely crathur,’ but, bedad, his good luck failed him for *wanst*, for instead of seeing her coming over to him, so mild and sweet, who does he obsarve steering at a dog’s trot, but his ould friend, the smoking cur. ‘Confusion to that cur,’ says Jack to himself, ‘I know now there’s some bad fortune before me, or he wouldn’t be coming across me.’

“ ‘Come home to your breakfast, Jack,’ says the dog, walking up to him, ‘it’s breakfast time.’

“ ‘Ay,’ says Jack, scratching his head, ‘it’s no great matter whether I do or not, for I bleave my head’s hardly worth a flat-dutch cabbage at the present speaking.’

“ ‘Why, man, it was never worth so much,’ says the baste, pulling out his pipe and putting it in his mouth, when it lit at once.

“ ‘Take care of yourself,’ says Jack, quite desperate,—for he thought he was near the end of his tether,—‘take care of yourself, you dirty cur, or maybe I might take a gintleman’s toe from your tail.’

“ ‘You had better keep a straight tongue in your head,’ says four-legs, ‘while it’s on your shoulders, or I’ll break every bone in your skin.—Jack, you’re a fool,’ says he, checking himself, and speaking kindly to him—‘you’re a fool; didn’t I tell you the other day to do what you were bid, and keep never minding?’

“ ‘Well,’ thought Jack to himself, ‘there’s no use in making him any more my enemy than he is—particularly as I’m in such a hobble.’

“ ‘You lie,’ says the dog, as if Jack had spoken *out* to him, wherein he only thought the words to himself, ‘you lie,’ says he, ‘I’m not, nor never was, your enemy, if you knew but all.’

“ ‘I beg your honour’s pardon,’ answers Jack, ‘for being so smart with your honour; but, bedad, if you were in my case,—if you expected

your master to roast you alive,—eat his dinner of your body,—make you sing the Black Joke, by way of music for him; and, to crown all, knew that your head was to be stuck upon a hook after—maybe you would be a little short in your temper, as well as your neighbours.'

" 'Take heart, Jack,' says the other, laying his fore claw as knowingly as ever along his nose, and winking slyly at Jack, 'didn't I tell you that you had a friend in coort?—the day's not past yet, so cheer up, who knows but there is luck before you still?'

" 'Why, thin,' says Jack, getting a little cheerful, and wishing to crack a joke with him, 'but your honour's very fond of the pipe?' 'Oh! don't you know, Jack,' says he, 'that that's the fashion at present among my tribe; sure all my brother puppies smoke now, and a man might as well be out of the world as out of the fashion, you know.'

" 'When they drew near home, they got quite thick entirely; 'Now,' says Jack, in a good-humoured way, 'if you can give me a lift in robbing this crane's nest, do; at any rate I'm sure your honour won't be my enemy. I know you have too much good-nature in your face to be one that wouldn't help a lame dog over a stile—that is,' says he, taking himself up for fear of offending the other,—'I'm sure you'd be always inclined to help the weak side.'

" 'Thank you for the compliment,' says the dog; 'but didn't I tell you that you have a friend in coort?'

" 'When Jack went back to the lake, he could only sit and look sorrowfully at the tree, or walk about the edge of it, without being able to do any thing else. He spent the whole day this way, till dinner-time, when, what would you have of it, but he sees the 'darlin' coming out to him, as fair and as blooming as an angel. His heart, you may be sure, got up to his mouth, for he knew she would be apt to take him out of his difficulties. When she came up—

" 'Now Jack,' says she, 'there is not a minute to be lost, for I'm watch'd; and if it's discovered that I gave you any assistance, we will be both destroyed.'

" 'Oh, murther sheery*!' says Jack, 'fly back, avourneen machree—for rather than any thing should happen you, I'd lose fifty lives.'

" 'No,' says she, 'I think I'll be able to get you over this, as well as the rest; so have a good heart, and be faithful.' 'That's it,' replied Jack, 'that's it, acushla—my own *correcthur* to a shaving; I've a heart worth its weight in bank notes, and a more faithful boy isn't alive this day nor I am to yez all, ye darlings of the world.'

" She then pulled a small white wand out of her pocket, struck the lake, and there was the prettiest green ridge across it to the foot of the tree, that ever eye beheld. 'Now,' says she, 'turning her back to Jack and stooping down to do something that he couldn't see, 'Take these, giving him her ten toes, 'put them against the tree, and you will have steps to carry you to the top, but be sure, for *your* life and mine, not to forget any of them. If you do, my life will be taken to-morrow morning, for your master puts on my slippers with his own hands.'

" Jack was now going to swear that he would give up the whole thing

* Murder everlasting.

and surrender his head at once; but when he looked at her feet, and saw no appearance of blood, he went over without more to do, and robbed the nest, taking down the eggs one by one, that he mightn't brake them. There was no end to his joy, as he secured the last egg; he instantly took down the toes, one after another, save and except the little one of the left foot, which, in his joy and hurry he forgot entirely. He then returned by the green ridge to the shore, and accordingly as he went along, it melted away into water behind him.

"'Jack,' says the charmer, 'I hope you forgot none of my toes.'

"'Is it me?' says Jack, quite sure that he had them all—'arrah, catch any one from my country makin' a blunder of that kind.'

"'Well,' says she, 'let us see;' so, taking the toes, she placed them on again, just as if they had never been off. But, lo and behold! on coming to the last of the left foot, it wasn't forthcoming. 'Oh! Jack, Jack,' says she, 'you have destroyed me; to-morrow morning your master will notice the want of this toe, and that instant I'll be put to death.'

"'I lave that to me,' says Jack; 'by the powers, you won't lose a drop of your darling blood for it. Have you got a pen-knife about you? and I'll soon show you how you won't.'

"'What do you want with the knife?' she inquired.

"'What do I want with it?—Why to give you the best toe on both my feet, for the one I lost on you; do you think I'd suffer you to want a toe, and I having ten thumping ones at your sarvice?—I'm not the man, you beauty you, for such a shabby trick as that comes to.'

"'But you forget,' says the lady, who was a little cooler than Jack, 'that none of yours would fit me.'

"'And must you die to-morrow, *acushla*?' asked Jack, in desperation.

"'As sure as the sun rises,' answered the lady; 'for your master would know at once that it was by *my* toes the nest was robbed.'

"'By the powers,' observed Jack, 'he's one of the greatest ould vag—I mane, isn't he a terrible man, out and out, for a father?'

"'Father!' says the darling,—'he's not my father, Jack; he only wishes to marry me, and if I'm not able to outdo him before three days more, it's decreed that he must have me.'

"'When Jack heard this, surely the Irishman must come out; there he stood, and began to wipe his eyes with the skirt of his coat, making as if he was crying, the thief of the world. 'What's the matter with you?' she asked.

"'Ah!' says Jack, 'you darling. I couldn't find in my heart to desave you; for I have no way at home to keep a lady like you, in proper style, at all at all; I would only bring you into poverty, and since you wish to know what ails me, I'm vexed that I'm not rich for your sake; and next, that that thieving ould villain's to have you; and by the powers, I'm crying for both these misfortunes together.'

"'The lady could not help being touched and plaised with Jack's tinderness and ginerosity; so, says she, 'don't be cast down, Jack, come or go what will, I won't marry him—I'd die first. Do you go home as

THE HISTORY OF JACK AND THE BEANSTALK



How the beautiful lady accuses Jack with his tasks

THE END
OF THE
FIRST PART

and surrender his head at once ; but when he looked at her feet, and saw no appearance of blood, he went over without more to do, and robbed the nest, taking down the eggs one by one, that he mightn't brake them. There was no end to his joy, as he secured the last egg ; he instantly took down the toes, one after another, save and except the little one of the left foot, which, in his joy and hurry he forgot entirely. He then returned by *the green ridge to the shore, and accordingly as he went along, it melted away into water behind him.*

" 'Jack,' says the charmer, ' I hope you forgot none of my toes.'

" 'Is it me?' says Jack, quite sure that he had them all—' arrah, catch any one from my country makin' a blunder of that kind.'

" 'Well,' says she, 'let us see;' so, taking the toes, she placed them on again, just as if they had never been off. But, lo and behold! on coming to the last of the left foot, it wasn't forthcoming. 'Oh! Jack, Jack,' says she, 'you have destroyed me; to-morrow morning your master will notice the want of this toe, and that instant I'll be put to death.'

" 'Lave that to me,' says Jack; 'by the powers, you won't lose a drop of your darling blood for it. Have you got a pen-knife about you? and I'll soon show you how you won't.'

" 'What do you want with the knife?' she inquired.

" 'What do I want with it?—Why to give you the best toe on both my feet, for the one I lost on you; do you think I'd suffer you to want a toe, and I having ten thumping ones at your sarvice?—I'm not the man, you beauty you, for such a shabby trick as that comes to.'

" 'But you forget,' says the lady, who was a little cooler than Jack, 'that none of yours would fit me.'

" 'And must you die to-morrow, *acushla*?' asked Jack, in desperation.

" 'As sure as the sun rises,' answered the lady; 'for your master would know at once that it was by *my* toes the nest was robbed.'

" 'By the powers,' observed Jack, 'he's one of the greatest ould vag—I mane, isn't he a terrible man, out and out, for a father?'

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How the beautiful Lady assists Jack with his tasks

usual ; but take care and don't sleep at all this night. Saddle the wild filly—meet me under the whitethorn bush at the end of the lawn, and we'll both leave him for ever. If you're willing to marry me, don't let poverty distress you, for I have more money than we'll know what to do with.'

" Jack's voice now began to tremble in earnest, with downright love and tinderness, as good right it had ; so he promised to do every thing just as she bid him, and then went home with a dacent appetite enough to his supper.

" You may be sure the ould fellow looked darker and grimmer than ever at Jack : but what could he do ? Jack had done his duty ; so he sat before the fire, and sung ' Love among the Roses,' and the ' Black Joke,' with a stouter and a lighter heart than ever, while the black chap could have seen him skivered.

" When midnight came, Jack, who kept a hawk's eye to the night, was at the hawthorn with the wild filly, saddled and all—more betoken, she wasn't a bit wild then, but as tame as a dog. Off they set, like Erin-go-bragh, Jack and the lady, and never pulled bridle till it was one o'clock next day, when they stopped at an inn, and had some refreshment. They then took to the road again, full speed ; however, they hadn't gone far, when they heard a great noise behind them, and the tramp of horses galloping like mad. ' Jack,' says the darling, on hearing the hubbub, ' look behind you, and see what's this.'

" ' Och ! by the elevens,' says Jack, ' we're done at last ; it's the dark fellow, and half the country after us.' ' Put your hand,' says she, ' in the filly's right ear, and tell me what you find in it.' ' Nothing at all,' says Jack, ' but a weeshy bit of a dry stick.' ' Throw it over your left shoulder,' says she, ' and see what will happen.'

" Jack did so at once, and there was a great grove of thick trees growing so close to one another, that a dandy could scarcely get his arm betwixt them. ' Now,' said she, ' we are safe for another day.' ' Well,' said Jack, as he pushed on the filly, ' you're the jewel of the world, sure enough ; and maybe it's you that won't live happy when we get to the Jim of the Ocean.'

" As soon as dark-face saw what happened, he was obliged to scour the country for hatchets and hand-saws, and all kinds of sharp instruments, to hew himself and his men a passage through the grove. As the saying goes, many hands make light work, and sure enough, it wasn't long till they had cleared a way for themselves, thick as it was, and set off with double speed after Jack and the Lady.

" The next day, about one o'clock, he and she were after taking another small refreshment of roast-beef and porther, and pushing on, as before, when they heard the same tramping behind them, only it was ten times louder.

" ' Here they are again,' says Jack ; ' and I'm afeard they'll come up with us at last.'

" ' If they do,' says she, ' they'll put us to death on the spot ; but we must try somehow to stop them another day, if we can : search the filly's right ear again, and let me know what you find in it.'

" Jack pulled out a little three-cornered pebble, telling her that it was

all he got ; ' well,' says she, ' throw it over your left shoulder like the stick.'

" No sooner said than done ; and there was a great chain of high, sharp rocks in the way of divel-face and all his clan. ' Now,' says she, ' we have gained another day.' ' Tundher-and-turf!' says Jack, ' what's this for, at all at all ?—but wait till I get you in the Immerald Isle, for this, and if you don't enjoy happy days any how, why I'm not sitting before you on this horse, by the same token that it's not a horse at all, but a filly though : if you don't get the hoith of good aiting and drinking—lashings of the best wine and whisky that the land can afford, my name's not Jack. We'll build a castle, and you'll have up stairs and down stairs—a coach and six to ride in—lots of sarvints to attend on you, and full and plinty of every thing ; not to minton—hem !—not to minton that you'll have a husband that the fairest lady in the land might be proud of,' says he, stretching himself up in the saddle, and giving the filly a jag of the spurs, to show off a bit ; although the coaxing rogue knew that the money which was to do all this was her own. At any rate, they spent the remainder of this day pleasantly enough, still moving on, though, as fast as they could. Jack, every now and then, would throw an eye behind, as if to watch their pursuers, wherein, if the truth was known, it was to get a peep at the beautiful glowing face and warm lips that were breathing all kinds of *fraagrancies* about him. I'll warrant he didn't envy the king upon his throne, when he felt the honeysuckle of her breath, like the smell of Father Ned's orchard there, of a May morning.

" When *Fardorougha* * found the great chain of rocks before him, you may set it down that he was likely to blow up with vexation ; but, for all that, the first thing he blew up was the rocks—and that he might lose little or no time in doing it, he collected all the gunpowder and crow-bars, spades, and pick-axes, that could be found for miles about him, and set to it, working as if it was with inch of candle. For half a day there was nothing but boring and splitting, and driving of iron wedges, and blowing up pieces of rocks as big as little houses, until, by hard labour, they made a passage for themselves sufficient to carry them over. They then set off again, full speed ; and great advantage they had over the poor filly that Jack and the lady rode on, for their horses were well rested, and hadn't to carry double, like Jack's. The next day they spied Jack and his beautiful companion, just about a quarter of a mile before them.

" ' Now,' says dark-brow, ' I'll make any man's fortune for ever that will bring me them two, either living or dead, but, if possible, alive ; so, spur on, for whoever secures them, man, woman, or child, is a made man, but, above all, make no noise.'

" It was now divil take the hindmost among the bloody pack—every spur was red with blood, and every horse smoking. Jack and the lady were jogging on *across* a green field, not suspecting that the rest were so near them, and talking over the pleasant days they would *spind* together in Ireland, when they *hears* the hue-and-cry once more at their very heels.

" ' Quick as lightning, Jack,' says she, ' or we're lost—the right ear

* The dark man.

and the left shoulder, like thought—they're not three lengths of the filly from us !'

" But Jack knew his business ; for just as a long, grim-looking villain, with a great rusty rapier in his hand, was within a single leap of them, and



quite sure of either killing or making prisoners of them both, Jack flings a little drop of green water that he got in the filly's ear, over his left shoulder, and in an instant there was a deep, dark gulf, filled with black, pitchy-looking water between them. The lady now desired Jack to pull up the filly a bit, that they might see what would become of the dark fellow ; but just as they turned round, the ould nager set spurs to his horse, and, in a fit of desperation, plunged himself, horse and all, into the gulf, and was never seen or heard of more. The rest that were with him went home, and began to quarrel about his wealth, and kept murdering and killing one another, until a single vagabond of them wasn't left alive to enjoy it.

" When Jack saw what happened, and that the blood-thirsty ould villain got what he desarved so richly, he was as happy as a prince, and ten times happier than most of them as the world goes, and she was every bit as delighted. ' We have nothing more to fear,' said the darling that put them all down so cleverly, seeing that she was but a woman ; but, bedad, it's she was the right sort of a woman—' all our dangers are now over, at least, all yours are ; regarding myself,' says she, ' there's a trial before me yet, and that trial, Jack, depends upon your faithfulness and constancy.'

" ' On me, is it ?—Och, then, murder ! isn't it a poor case entirely, that I have no way of showing you that you may depind your life upon me, only by telling you so ?'

" ' I do depend upon you,' says she—' and now, as you love me, do not, when the trial comes, forget her that saved you out of so many troubles, and made you such a great and wealthy man.'

" The foregoing part of this Jack could well understand, but the last part of it, making *collusion* to the wealth, was a little dark, as he thought, bekase, he hadn't fingered any of it at the time : still, he knew she was truth to the back-bone, and wouldn't *desave* him. They hadn't travelled much farther, when Jack snaps his fingers with a ' Whoo ! by the powers, there it is, my darling—there it is, at long last !'

" ' There is what, Jack ?' said she, surprised, as well she might, at his mirth and happiness—' There is what ?' says she.

“ ‘ Cheer up ! ’ says Jack ; ‘ there it is, my darling,—the Shannon !—as soon as we get to the other side of it, we’ll be in ould Ireland once more.’ ”

“ There was no end to Jack’s good humour, when he crossed the Shannon ; and she was not a bit displeas’d to see him so happy. They had now no enemies to fear, were in a civilized country, and among green fields and well-bred people. In this way they travelled at their ease, till they came within a few miles of the town of Knockindowny, near which Jack’s mother lived.

“ Now, Jack,’ says she, ‘ I told you that I would make you rich. You know the rock beside your mother’s cabin ; in the east end of that rock there is a loose stone, covered over with gray moss, just two feet below the cleft out of which the hanging rowan-tree grows—pull that stone out, and you will find more goold than would make a duke. Neither speak to any person, nor let any living thing touch your lips till you come back to me, or you’ll forget that you ever saw me, and I’ll be left poor and friendless in a strange country.’ ”

“ ‘ Why, thin, *manim asthee hu**,’ says Jack, ‘ but the best way to guard against that, is to touch your own sweet lips at the present time,’ says he, giving her a smack that you’d hear, of a calm evening, across a couple of fields. Jack set off to touch the money, with such speed that when he fell he scarcely waited to rise again ; he was soon at the rock, any how, and without either doubt or disparagement, there was a cleft of ra-al goolden guineas, as fresh as daisies. The first thing he did, after he had filled his pockets with them, was to look if his mother’s cabin was to the fore ; and there surely it was, as snug as ever, with the same decent column of smoke rowling from the chimbley.

“ ‘ Well,’ thought he, ‘ I’ll just stale over to the door-cheek, and peep in to get one sight of my poor mother ; then I’ll throw her in a handful of these guineas, and take to my scrapers.’ ”

“ Accordingly, he stole up at a half bend to the door, and was just going to take a peep in, when out comes the little dog Trig, and begins to leap and fawn upon him, as if it would eat him. The mother, too, came running out to see what was the matter, when the dog made another spring up about Jack’s neck, and gave his lips the slightest lick in the world with its tongue, the crathur was so glad to see him : the next minute, Jack forgot the lady, as *clane* as if he had never seen her ; but if he forgot her, catch him at forgetting the money—not he, *avick* !—that stuck to him like pitch.

“ When the mother saw who it was, she flew to him, and, clasping her arms about his neck, hugged him till she wasn’t worth three half-pence. After Jack *sot* a while, he made a trial to let her know what had happened him, but he *disremembered* it all, except having the money in the rock, so he up and tould her that, and a glad won an she was to hear of his good fortune. Still he kept the place where the goold was to himself, having been often forbid by her ever to trust a woman with a sacret when he could avoid it.

* My soul’s within you.

“ Now every body knows what changes the money makes, and Jack was no exception to this ould saying. In a few years he built himself a fine castle, with three hundred and sixty-four *windies* in it, and he would have added another, to make one for every day in the year, only that would be equal to the number in the King's palace, and the Lord of the Black Rod would be sent to take his head off, it being high *thrason* for a subject to have as many windies in his house as the king.* However, Jack, at any rate, had enough of them; and he that couldn't be happy with three hundred and sixty-four, wouldn't deserve to have three hundred and sixty-five. Along with all this, he bought coaches and carriages, and didn't get proud like many another beggarly upstart, but took especial good care of his mother, whom he dressed in silks and satins, and gave her nice nourishing food, that was fit for an ould woman in her condition. He also got great tachers, men of great larning, from Dublin, acquainted with all subjects; and as his own abilities were bright, he soon became a very great scholar, entirely, and was able, in the longrun, to outdo all his tutherers.

“ In this way he lived for some years—was now a man of great larning himself—could spake the seven *langidges*, and it would delight your ears to hear how high-flown and Englified he could talk. All the world wondered where he got his wealth; but as he was kind and charitable to every one that stood in need of assistance, the people said that wherever he got it it couldn't be in better hands. At last he began to look about him for a wife, and the only one in that part of the country that would be at all fit for him, was the Honourable Miss Bandbox, the daughter of a nobleman in the neighbourhood. She indeed flogged all the world for beauty; but it was said that she was proud and fond of wealth, though, God he knows, she had enough of that any how. Jack, however, saw none of this; for she was cunning enough to smile, and simper, and look pleasant, whenever he'd come to her father's. Well, begad, from one thing, and one word, to another, Jack thought it was best to make up to her at *wanst*, and try if she'd accept of him for a husband; accordingly he put the word to her like a man, and she, making as if she was blushing, put her fan before her face and made no answer. Jack, however, wasn't to be daunted; for he knew two things worth knowing, when a man goes to look for a wife: the first is—that ‘faint heart never won fair lady,’ and the second—that ‘silence gives consent;’ he, therefore, spoke up to her in fine English, for it's he that knew how to speak now, and, after a little more fanning and blushing, by jingo, she consented. Jack then broke the matter to her father, who was as fond of money as the daughter, and only wanted to grab at him for the wealth.

“ When the match was a making, says ould Bandbox to Jack, ‘Mr. Magennis,’ says he, (for nobody called him Jack now but his mother)—‘these two things you must comply with, if you marry my daughter, Miss Gripsy:—you must send away your mother from about you, and pull down the cabin in which you and she used to live; Gripsy says that they would jog her memory consarning your low birth and former poverty;

* Such is the popular opinion.

she's nervous and high-spirited, Mr. Magennis, and declares upon her honour that she couldn't bear the thoughts of having the delicacy of her feeling offended by these things.'

" 'Good morning to you both,' says Jack, like an honest fellow as he was, 'if she doesn't marry me except on these conditions, give her my compliments, and tell her our courtship is at an end.'

" But it wasn't long till they soon came out with another story, for before a week passed, they were very glad to get him on his own conditions. Jack was now as happy as the day was long—all things appointed for the wedding, and nothing wanting to make everything to his heart's content but the wife, and her he was to have in less than no time. For a day or two before the wedding, there never was seen such grand preparations: bullocks, and hogs, and sheep were roasted whole—kegs of whisky, both Roscrea and Innishowen, barrels of ale and beer, were there in dozens. All descriptions of niceties and wild-fowl, and fish from the *say*; and the dearest wine that could be bought with money, was got for the gentry and grand folks. Fiddlers, and pipers, and harpers, in short, all kinds of music and musicians, played in shoals. Lords and ladies, and squares of high degree were present—and, to crown the thing, there was open house to all comers.

" At length the wedding-day arrived; there was nothing but roasting and boiling; servants dressed in rich liveries ran about with joy and delight in their countenances, and white gloves and wedding favours on their hats and hands. To make a long story short, they were all seated in Jack's castle at the wedding breakfast, ready for the priest to marry them when they'd be done; for in them times people were never married until they had laid in a good foundation to carry them through the ceremony. Well, they were all seated round the table, the men dressed in the best of broadcloth, and the ladies rustling in their silks and satins—their heads, necks, and arms hung round with jewels both rich and rare: but of all that were there that day, there wasn't the likes of the bride and bridegroom. As for him, nobody could think, at all at all, that he was ever any thing else than a born gentleman; and what was more to his credit, he had his kind *ould* mother sitting beside the bride, to tache her that an honest person, though poorly born, is company for the king. As soon as the breakfast was served up, they all set to, and maybe the *various* kinds of eatables did not pay for it; and amongst all this cutting and thrusting, no doubt but it was remarked, that the bride herself was behindhand *wid* none of them—that she took her *dalin-trick* without flinching, and made nothing less than a right fog meal of it: and small blame to her for that same, you persave.

" When the breakfast was over, up gets Father Flannagan—out with his book, and on with his stole, to marry them. The bride and bridegroom went up to the end of the room, attended by their friends, and the rest of the company stood on each side of it, for you see they were too high bred, and knew their manners too well, to stand in a crowd like spalpeens. For all that, there was many a sly look from the ladies to their bachelors, and many a titter among them, grand as they were; for, to tell the truth, the best of them likes to see fun in the way, particularly of that sort.

The priest himself was in as great a glee as any of them, only he kept it under, and well he might, for sure enough this marriage was nothing less than a rale windfall to him and the parson that was to marry them after him—bekase you persave a Protestant and Catholic must be married by both, otherwise it does not hould good in law. The parson was as grave as a mustard-pot, and Father Flannagan called the bride and bridegroom his childher, which was a big bounce for him to say the likes of, more betoken that neither of them was a drop's blood to him.

“ However, he pulled out the book, and was just beginning to buckle them, when in comes Jack's ould acquaintance, the smoking cus, as grave as ever. The priest had just got through two or three words of Latin, when the dog gives him a pluck by the sleeve; Father Flannagan, of coorse, turned round to see who it was that nudged him: ‘ Behave yourself,’ says the dog to him, just as he peeped over his shoulder—‘ behave yourself,’ says he; and with that he sat him down on *his bunkers* beside the priest, and pulling a cigar instead of a pipe out of his pocket, he put it in his mouth, and began to smoke for the bare life of him. And, by my own word, it's he that could smoke: at times he would shoot the smoke in a slender stream like a knitting-needle, with a round curl at the one end it, ever so far out of the *right* side of his mouth; then he would shoot it out of the *left*, and sometimes make it swirl out so beautiful from the middle of his lips!—why, then, it's he that must have been the well-bred puppy all out, as far as smoking went. Father Flannagan and they all were tunderstruck.

“ ‘ In the name of St. Anthony, and of that holy nun, St. Teresa,’ said his Reverence to him, ‘ who and what are you, at all at all?’

“ ‘ Never mind that,’ says the dog, taking the cigar for a minute between his claws; ‘ but if you wish particularly to know, I'm a thirty-second cousin of your own by the mother's side.’

“ ‘ I command you in the name of all the saints,’ says Father Flannagan, believing him to be the devil, ‘ to disappear from among us, and never become visible to any one in this house again.’

“ ‘ The sorra a budge, at the present time, will I budge,’ says the dog to him, ‘ until I see all sides rightified, and the rogues disappointed.’

“ Now one would be apt to think the appearance of a *spaking* dog might be after fright'ning the ladies; but doesn't all the world know that *spaking* puppies are their greatest favourites? Instead of that, you see, there was half a dozen fierce-looking whiskered fellows, and three or four half-pay officers, that were nearer making off than the ladies. But, besides the cigar, the dog had his beautiful eye-glass, and through it, while he was *spaking* to Father Flannagan, he ogled all the ladies, one after another, and when his eye would light upon any that pleased him, he would kiss his paw to her and wag his tail with the greatest politeness.

“ ‘ John,’ says Father Flannagan, to one of the servants, ‘ bring me salt and water, till I consecrate them* to banish the divil, for he has appeared to us all during broad daylight in the shape of a dog.’

“ ‘ You had better behave yourself, I say again,’ says the dog, ‘ or if

* Salt and water consecrated by a particular form is Holy Water.

you make me speak, by my honour as a gentleman I'll expose you: I say, you won't marry the same two, neither this nor any other day, and I'll give you my reasons presently; but I *repate* it, Father Flannagan, if you compel me to speak, I'll make you look nine ways at once.'

" 'I defy you, Satan,' says the priest; 'and if you don't take yourself away before the holy wather's made, I'll send you off in a flame of fire.'

" 'Oh! yes, I'm trimbling,' says the dog: 'plenty of *spirits* you laid in your day, but it was in a place that's nearer to us than the Red Sea, you did it: listen to me though, for I don't wish to expose you, as I said; so he gets on his hind legs, puts his nose to the priest's ear, and whispers something that none of the rest could hear—all before the priest had time to know where he was. At any rate, whatever he said seemed make his Reverence look *double*, though, faix, that wasn't hard to do, for he was as big as *two* common men. When the dog was done speaking, and had put his cigar in his mouth, the priest seemed tunderstruck, crossed himself, and was, no doubt of it, in great perplexity.

" 'I say it's false,' says Father Flannagan, plucking up his courage; 'but you know you're a liar, and the father of liars.'

" 'As thrue as gospel, this bout, I tell you,' says the dog.

" 'Wait till I make my holy wather,' says the priest, 'and if I don't cork you in a thumb-bottle for this,* I'm not here.'

" Just at this minute, the whole company sees a gentleman galloping for the bare life of him, up to the hall-door, and he dressed like an officer. In three jiffeys he was down off his horse, and in among the company. The dog, as soon as he made his appearance, laid his claw as usual on his nose, and gave the bridegroom a wink, as much as to say, 'watch what'll happen.'

" Now it was very odd that Jack, during all this time, remembered the dog very well, but could never once think of the darling that did so much for him. As soon, however, as the officer made his appearance, the bride seemed as if she would sink outright; and when he walked up to her, to ax what was the meaning of what he saw, why, down she drops at once—fainted clane. The gentleman then went up to Jack, and says, 'Sir, was this lady about to be married to you?'

" 'Sartinly,' says Jack, 'we were going to be yoked in the blessed and holy tackle of mathrimony;' or some high-flown words of that kind.

" 'Well, Sir,' says the other back to him, 'I can only say that she is most solemnly sworn never to marry another man but me at a time; that oath she *tuck* when I was joining my regiment before it went abroad; and if the ceremony of your marriage be performed, you will sleep with a perjured bride.'

" Begad, he did, plump before all their faces. Jack, of coorse, was struck all of a hape at this; but as he had the bride in his arms, giving her a little sup of whisky to bring her to, *you persuade*, he couldn't make him an answer. However, she soon came to herself, and, on opening her eyes, 'Oh, hide me, hide me,' says she, 'for I can't bear to look on him!'

" 'He says you are his sworn bride, my darling,' says Jack.

* According to the superstitious belief of the Irish, a priest, when banishing a spirit, puts it into a thumb-bottle, which he either buries deep in the earth, or in some lake.

“ ‘ I am—I am,’ says she, covering her eyes, and crying away at the rate of a wedding: ‘ I can’t deny it; and, by tare-an-ounty!’ says she, ‘ I’m unworthy to be either his wife or yours; for, except I marry you both, I dunna how to settle this affair between you, at all;—oh, murther sheery! but I’m the misfortunate crathur, entirely.’

“ ‘ Well,’ says Jack to the officer, ‘ nobody can do more than be sorry for a wrong turn; small blame to her for taking a fancy to your humble servant, Mr. Officer,—and he stood as tall as possible to show himself off: ‘ you see the fair lady is sorrowful for her folly, so as it’s not yet too late, and as you came in the nick of time, in the name of Providence take my place, and let the marriage go au.’

“ ‘ No,’ says she, ‘ never; I’m not worthy of him, at all at all: tunder-an-age, but I’m the unlucky thief!’

“ While this was going forward, the officer looked closely at Jack, and seeing him such a fine, handsome fellow, and having heard before of his riches, he began to think that, all things considered, she wasn’t so much to be *blemt*. Then, when he saw how sorry she was for having forgot him, he steps *forrid*.

“ ‘ Well,’ says he, ‘ I’m still willing to marry you, particularly as you feel *contrition*——’ ”

“ He should have said *contrition*, confession, and satisfaction,” observed Father Peter.

“ Pether, will you keep your theology to yourself,” replied Father Ned, “ and let us come to the plot without interruption.”

“ Plot!” exclaimed Father Peter, “ I’m sure it’s no rebellion that there should be a plot in it, any way!”

“ *Tace*,” said Father Ned—“ *tace*, and that’s Latin for a candle.”

“ I deny that,” said the curate; “ *tace* is the imperative mood from *taceo*, to keep silent. *Taceo, taces, tacui, tacere, tacendi, tacendo, tac*——”

“ Ned, go on with your story, and never mind that deep larning of his—he’s almost cracked with it,” said the superior: “ go on, and never mind him.”

“ ‘ Well,’ says he, ‘ I’m still willing to marry you, particularly as you feel *contrition* for what you were going to do. So, with this, they all *gotter* about her, and, as the officer was a fine fellow himself, prevailed upon her to let the marriage be performed, and they were according spliced as fast as his Reverence could make them.

“ ‘ Now, Jack,’ says the dog, ‘ I want to spake with you for a minute—it’s a word for your own ear;’ so up he stands on his two hind legs, and pertinded to be whisp’ring something to him; but what do you think?—he gives him the slightest touch on the lips with his paw, and that instant Jack remimbered the lady and every thing that happened betune them.

“ Tell me, this instant,’ says Jack, seizing him by the throat, ‘ where’s the darling, at all, at all, or by this an by that you’ll hang on the next tree!’

“ Jack spoke finer nor this, to be sure, but as I can’t give his tall English, the sorra one of me will bother myself striving to do it.

“ ‘ Behave yourself,’ says the dog, ‘ just say nothing, only follow me.’

“ Accordingly, Jack went out with the dog, and in a few minutes

comes in again, *leading* along with him, *on the one side*, the loveliest lady that ever eye beheld, and the dog, that was her brother, now *metamorphosed* into a beautiful, elegant gentleman, on the other.

“ ‘Father Flannagan,’ says Jack, ‘you thought a while ago you’d have no marriage, but instead of that you’ll have a brace of them;’ up and telling the company, at the same time, all that had happened him, and how the beautiful crathur that he brought in with him had done so much for him.

“ ‘When the gentlemen heard this, as they were all Irishmen, you may be sure there was nothing but huzzaing and throwing up of hats from them, and waving of handkerchers from the ladies. Well, my dear, the wedding dinner was ate in great style; the nobleman proved himself no disgrace to his rank at the trencher; and so, to make a long story short, such feasting and banquetteering was never seen since or before. At last, night came; and, among ourselves, not a doubt of it, but Jack thought himself a happy man; and maybe if all was known, the bride was much of the same opinion: be that as it may, night came—the bride, all blushing, beautiful, and modest as your own sweetheart, was getting tired after the dancing; Jack, too, though much stouter, wished for a trifle of repose, and many thought it was near time to throw the stocking, as is proper, of course, on every occasion of the kind. Well, he was just on his way up stairs, and had reached the first landing, when he hears a voice at his ear, shouting, ‘Jack—Jack—Jack Magennis!’ Jack could have *spitted* anybody for coming to disturb him at such a criticality. ‘Jack Magennis!’ says the voice. Jack looked about to see who it was that called him, and there he found himself lying on the green *Rath*, a little above his mother’s cabin, of a fine calm summer’s evening, in the month of June.



His mother was stooping over him, with her mouth at his ear, striving to waken him, by shouting and shaking him out of his sleep.

“ ‘Oh ! by this and by that, mother,’ says Jack, ‘ what did you waken me for ?’

“ ‘ Jack, a-vourneen,’ says the mother, ‘ sure and you war lying grunting, and groaning, and snifthering there, for all the world as if you had the cholic, and I only nudged you for fraid you war in pain.’

“ ‘ I wouldn’t for a thousand guineas,’ says Jack, ‘ that ever you wakened me, at all, at all ; but whisht mother, go into the house, and I’ll be afther you in less than no time.’

“ The mother went in, and the first thing Jack did was to try the rock ; and, sure enough, there he found as much money as made him the richest man that ever was in the country. And what was to his credit, when he did grow rich, he wouldn’t let his cabin be thrown down, but built a fine castle on a spot near it, where he could always have it under his eye, to prevent him from getting proud. In the coorse of time, a harper, hearing the story, composed a tune upon it, which everybody knows is called the ‘ Little House under the Hill ’ to this day, beginning with—

‘ Hi for it, ho for it, hi for it still ;
Och, and whoo ! your sowl—hi for the little house under the hill !’

“ So you see that was the way the great Magennisses first came by their wealth, and all because Jack was industrious, and an obadient, dutiful, and tindher son, to his helpless ould mother, and well he deserved what he got, *orahis miata*.* Your healths Father Ned—Father Pether—all kinds of happiness to us ; and there’s my story.”

“ Well,” said Father Peter, “ I think that dog was nothing more or less than a downright cur, that deserved the lash nine times a day, if it was only for his want of respect to the clergy ; if he had given me such insolence, I solemnly declare I would have bate the devil out of him with a hazel cudgel, if I failed to exorcise him with a prayer.”

Father Ned looked at the simple and credulous curate with an expression of humour and astonishment.

“ Paddy,” said he to the servant, “ will you let us know what the night’s doing ? ”

Paddy looked out. “ Why, your Rev’rence, it’s a fine night, all out, and cleared up it is bravely.”

At this moment the stranger awoke.

“ Sir,” said Father Ned, “ you missed an amusing story, in consequence of your somnolency.”

“ Though I missed the story,” replied the stranger, “ I was happy enough to hear your friend’s critique upon the dog.”

Father Ned seemed embarrassed ; the curate, on the contrary, exclaimed with triumph—“ but wasn’t I right, sir ? ”

“ Perfectly,” said the stranger ; “ the moral you applied was excellent.”

“ Good night, boys,” said Father Ned—“ good night, Mr. Longinus Polysyllabus Alexandrinus ! ”

* Say I.

"Good night, boys," said Father Peter, imitating Father Ned, whom he looked upon as a perfect model of courtesy—"Good night, boys—good night, Mr. Longinus Polysyllabus Alexandrinus."

"Good night," replied the stranger—"good night, Doctor *Eduard* Deleery; and good night, Doctor Peter M'Clatchaghan—good night."

When the clergymen were gone, the circle about the fire, excepting the members of Ned's family and the stranger, dispersed to their respective homes; and thus ended the amusement of that evening.

After they had separated, Ned, whose curiosity respecting the stranger was by no means satisfied, began to sift him in his own peculiar manner, as they both sat at the fire.

"Well, Sir," said Ned, "barring the long play-acther that tumbles upon the big stage in the street of our market-town, here below, I haven't seen so long a man this many a day; and, barring your big whiskers, the sorra one of your honour's unlike him. A fine portly vagabone he is, indeed—a big man, and a bigger rogue, they say, for he pays nobody."

"Have you got such a company in your neighbourhood?" inquired the stranger, with indifference.

"We have, Sir," said Ned; "but, plase goodness, they'll soon be lashed like hounds from the place—the town boys are preparing to give them a chivey some fine morning out of the country."

"Indeed!—he—hem! that will be very spirited of the town boys," said the stranger, dryly.

"That's a smart looking horse your honour rides," observed Ned; "did he carry you far to-day, with submission?"

"Not far," replied his companion—"only fourteen miles; but, I suppose, the fact is, you wish to know who and what I am, where I came from, and whither I am going. Well, you shall know this. In the first place, I am agent to Lord Non Resident's estate, if you ever heard of that nobleman, and am on my way from Castle Ruin, the seat of his Lordship's Incumbrances, to Dublin. My name you have already heard. Are you now satisfied?"

"Parfitly, your honour," replied Ned, "and I am much obliged to you, Sir."

"I trust you are an honest man," said the stranger, "because for this night I am about to place great confidence in you."

"Well, Sir," said his landlord, "if I turn out dishonest to you, it's more nor I did in my whole life to any body else, barring to Nancy."

"Here, then," said the stranger, drawing out a large packet, inclosed in a roll of black leather—"here is the half year's rent of the estate, together with my own property: keep it secure till morning, when I shall demand it, and, of course, it will be safe?"

"As if it was five *fadoms* under ground," replied Ned. "I will put it along with our own trifle of silver; and after that, let Nancy alone for keeping it *safe*, so long as it's *there*;" saying which, Ned secured the packet, and showed the stranger his bed.

About five o'clock the next morning their guest was up, and ordered a snack in all haste; "being a military man," said he, "and accustomed

to timely hours, I shall ride down to the town, and put a letter into the post-office in time for the Dublin mail, after which you may expect me to breakfast. But, in the meantime, I am not to go with empty pockets," he added, when mounting his horse at the door—"bring me some silver, landlord, and be quick."

"How much, please your honour?"

"Twenty or thirty shillings; but, harkee, produce my packet, that I may be quite certain my property is safe."

"Here it is, your honour, safe and sound," replied Ned, returning from within; "and Nancy, sir, has sent you all the silver she has, which was One Pound Five; but I'd take it as a favour if your honour would be content with twenty shillings, and lave me the odd five, for you see the case is this, sir, please your honour, *she*," and Ned, with a shrewd, humorous nod, pointed with his thumb over his shoulder as he spoke—"she wears the—— what you know, sir."

"Ay, I thought so," replied the stranger; "but a man of your size to be hen-pecked must be a great knave, otherwise your wife would allow you more liberty. Go in, man; you deserve no compassion in such an age of freedom as this. I sha'n't give you a farthing till after my return, and only then if it be agreeable to your wife."*

"Murder!" said Ned, astonished, "I beg your honour's pardon; but murder alive, sir, where's your whiskers?"

The stranger put his hand hastily to his face, and smiled—"Where are my whiskers? Why shaved off, to be sure," he replied; and setting spurs to his horse, was soon out of sight and hearing.

It was nearly a month after that, when Ned and Nancy, in presence of Father Deleery, opened the packet, and discovered, not the half-year's rent of Lord Non-Resident's estate, but a large sheaf of play-bills



* Ned M'Keown was certainly a very remarkable individual, and became, in consequence of his appearance in these pages, a person of considerable notoriety during the latter years of his life. His general character, and the nature of his unsuccessful speculations, I have drawn with great truth. There is only one point alone in which I have done him injustice, and that is in depicting him as a hen-pecked husband. The truth is, I had a kind of good-humoured pique against Ned, and for the following reasons:—The cross roads at which he lived formed a central point for all the youngsters of the neighbourhood to assemble for the purpose

packed up together—their guest having been the identical person to whom Ned affirmed he bore so strong a resemblance.

of practising athletic exercises, of which I, in my youth, was excessively fond. Now Ned never would suffer me to join my young acquaintances in these harmless and healthful sports, but on every occasion, whenever he saw me, he would run out with a rod or cudgel and chase me from the scene of amusement. This, to a boy so enthusiastically devoted to such diversions as I was, often occasioned me to give him many a hearty malediction when at a safe distance. In fact, he continued this practice until I became too much of a man to run away, after which he durst only growl and mutter abuse, whilst I snapped my fingers at him. For this reason then, and remembering all the vexatious privations of my favourite sports which he occasioned me, I resolved to turn the laugh against him, which I did effectually, by bringing him out in the character of a hen-pecked husband, which was indeed very decidedly opposed to his real one. My triumph was complete, and Ned, on hearing himself read of "in a book," waxed indignant and wrathful. In speaking of me he could not for the life of him express any other idea of my age and person than that by which he last remembered me. "What do you think" he would exclaim, "there's that *young* Carleton has put me in a book, an made Nancy leather *me*!" Ned survived Nancy several years, and married another wife, whom I never saw. About twenty-five years ago he went to America, where he undertook to act as a tanner, and nearly ruined his employer. After some time he returned home, and was forced to mend roads. Towards the close of his life, however, he contrived to get an ass and cart, and became egg-merchant, but I believe with his usual success. In this last capacity, I think about two years ago, he withdrew from all his cares and speculations, and left behind him the character of an honest, bustling, good-humoured man, whom everybody knew and everybody liked, and whose harmless eccentricities many will long remember with good-humour and regret.





IN the following evening, the neighbours were soon assembled about Ned's hearth, in the same manner as on the night preceding:—

And we may observe, by the way, that although there was a due admixture of opposite creeds and conflicting principles, yet even then, and the time is not so far back, such was their cordiality of heart and simplicity of manners when contrasted with the bitter and rancorous spirit of the present day, that the very remembrance of the harmony in which they lived is at once pleasing and melancholy.

After some preliminary chat, "Well Shane," said Andy Morrow, addressing Shane Fadh, "will you give us an account of your wedding? I'm told it was the greatest let-out that ever was in the country, before or since."

"And you may say that, Mr. Morrow," said Shane, "I was at many a wedding myself, but never at the likes of my own, barring Tim Lannigan's, that married Father Corrigan's niece."

"I believe," said Andy, "that, too, was a dashing one; however, it's your own we want. Come, Nancy, fill these measures again, and let us

be comfortable, at all events, and give Shane a double one, for talking's druthy work.—I'll stand this round."

When the liquor was got in, Shane, after taking a draught, laid down his pint, pulled out his steel tobacco-box, and, after twisting off a chew between his teeth, closed the box, and commenced the story of his wedding.

"When I was a Brive-Oge*," said Shane, "I was as wild as an unbroken cow-t—no divilment was too hard for me; and so sign's on it, for there wasn't a piece of mischief done in the parish, but was laid at my door—and the dear knows I had enough of my own to answer for, let alone to be set down for that of other people; but, any way, there was many a thing done in my name, when I knew neither act nor part about it. One of them I'll mention: Dick Cuillenán, father to Paddy, that lives at the cross-roads, beyant Gunpowdher Lodge, was over head and ears in love with Jemmy Finigan's eldest daughter, Mary, then, sure enough, as purty a girl as you'd meet in a fair—indeed, I think I'm looking at her, with her fair flaxen ringlets hanging over her shoulders, as she used to pass our house, going to mass of a Sunday. God rest her sowl, she's now in glory—that was before she was my wife. Many a happy day we passed together; and I could take it to my death, that an ill word, let alone to rise our hands to one another, never passed between us—only one day, that a word or two happened about the dinner, in the middle of Lent, being a little too late, so that the horses were kept nigh hand half an hour out of the plough; and I wouldn't have valued that so much, only that it was *Beal cam†* Doherty that joined‡ me in ploughing that year—and I was vexed not to take all I could out of him, for he was a raal Turk himself.

"I disremember now what passed between us as to words—but I know I had a duck-egg in my hand, and when she spoke, I raised my arm, and nailed—poor Larry Tracy, our servant boy, between the two eyes with it, although the crathur was ating his dinner quietly forment me, not saying a word.

"Well, as I tould you, Dick was ever after her, although her father and mother would rather see her *under boord§*, than joined to any of that

* A young man full of fun and frolic. The word literally signifies Young Brian. Such phrases originate thus:—A young man remarkable for one or more qualities of a particular nature becomes so famous for them that his name, in the course of time, is applied to others, as conveying the same character.

† Crooked mouth.

‡ In Ireland, small farmers who cannot afford to keep more than one horse are in the habit of "joining," as it is termed—that is, of putting their horses together so as to form a yoke, when they plough each other's farms, working alternately, sometimes by the week, half-week, or day; that is, I plough this day, or this week, and you the next day, or week, until our crops are got down. In this case, each is anxious to take as much out of the horses as he can, especially where the farms are unequal. For instance, where one farm is larger than another the difference must be paid by the owner of the larger one in horse-labour, man-labour, or money; but that he may have as little to pay as possible, he ploughs as much for himself, by the day, as he can, and often strives to get the other to do as little per day, on the other side, in order to diminish what will remain due to his partner. There is, consequently, a ludicrous undercurrent of petty jealousy running between them, which explains the passage in question.

§ In that part of the country where the scene of Shane Fadh's Wedding is laid, the bodies of those who die are not stretched out on a bed, and the face exposed; on the contrary, they are placed generally on the ground, or in a bed, but with a board resting upon two stools

connexion ; and as for herself, she couldn't bear the sight of him, he was sich an upsetting, conceited puppy, that thought himself too good for every girl. At any rate, he tried often and often, in fair and market, to get striking up with her ; and both coming from and going to mass, 'twas the same way, for ever after and about her, till the state he was in spread over the parish like wild fire. Still, all he could do was of no use ; except to bid him the time of day, she never entered into discourse with him, at all at all. But there was no putting the likes of him off ; so he got a quart of spirits in his pocket, one night, and without saying a word to mortal, off he sets full speed to her father's, in order to brake the thing to the family.

" Mary might be about seventeen at this time, and her mother looked almost as young and fresh as if she hadn't been married at all. When Dick came in, you may be sure they were all surprised at the sight of him ; but they were civil people—and the mother wiped a chair, and put it over near the fire for him to sit down upon, waiting to hear what he'd say, or what he wanted, although they could give a purty good guess as to that—but they only wished to put him off with as little offence as possible. When Dick *sot* a while, talking about what the price of hay and oats would be in the following summer, and other subjects that he thought would show his knowledge of farming and cattle, he pulls out his bottle, encouraged to it by their civil way of talking—and telling the ould couple, that as he came over on his *kailyee**, he had brought a drop in his pocket to sweeten the discooree, axing Susy Finigan, the mother, for a glass to send it round with—at the same time drawing over his chair close to Mary, who was knitting her stocken up beside her little brother Michael, and chatting to the gorsoon, for fraid that Cuillenan might think she paid *him* any attention.

" When Dick got alongside of her, he began, of coorse, to pull out her needles and spoil her knitting, as is customary before the young people come to close spaking. Mary, howsomever, had no welcome for him ; so, says she, ' You ought to know, Dick Cuillenan, who you spake to, before you make the freedom you do.'

" ' But you don't know,' says Dick, ' that I'm a great hand at spoiling the girls' knitting,—it's a fashion I've got,' says he.

" ' It's a fashion, then,' says Mary, ' that'll be apt to get you a broken mouth, some time†.' ' Then,' says Dick, ' whoever does that must marry me.'

" ' And them that gets you, will have a prize to brag of,' says she ; ' stop yourself, Cuillenan—single your freedom, and double your distance, if you plase ; I'll cut my coat off no such cloth.'

or chairs over them. This is covered with a clean sheet, generally borrowed from some wealthy neighbour ; so that the person of the deceased is altogether concealed. Over the sheet upon the board are placed plates of cut tobacco, pipes, snuff, &c. This is what is meant by being " undher board."

* *Kailyee*—a friendly evening visit.

† It is no unusual thing in Ireland for a country girl to repulse a fellow whom she thinks beneath her, if not by a flat at least by a flattening refusal ; nor is it seldom that the " *argumentum fistycuffium*" is resorted to on such occasions. I have more than once seen a disagreeable lover receive, from the fair hand which he sought, so masterly a blow, that a bleeding nose rewarded his ambition, and silenced for a time his importunity.

" 'Well, Mary,' says he, 'maybe, if *you* don't, as good will ; but you won't be so cruel as all that comes to—the worst side of you is out, I think.'

" He was now beginning to make greater freedom ; but Mary rises from her seat, and whisks away with herself, her cheek as red as a rose with vexation at the fellow's imperance. 'Very well,' says Dick, 'off you go ; but there's as good fish in the *say* as ever was caught.—I'm sorry to see, Susy,' says he to her mother, 'that Mary's no friend of mine, and I'd be mighty glad to find it otherwise ; for, to tell the truth, I'd wish to become connected with the family. In the mane time, hadn't you better get us a glass, till we drink one bottle on the head of it, any way.'

" 'Why, then, Dick Cuillenan,' says the mother, 'I don't wish you any thing else than good luck and happiness ; but, as to Mary, she's not *for* you herself, nor would it be a good match between the families at all. Mary is to have her grandfather's sixty guineas ; and the two *moullens** that her uncle Jack left her four years ago has brought her a good stock for any farm. Now if she married you, Dick, where's the farm to bring her to ?—surely, it's not upon them seven acres of stone and bent, upon the long Esker†, that I'd let my daughter go to live. So, Dick, put up your bottle, and in the name of God, go home, boy, and mind your business ; but, above all, when you want a wife, go to them that you may have a right to expect, and not to a girl like Mary Finigan, that could lay down guineas where you could hardly find shillings.'

" 'Very well, Susy,' says Dick, nettled enough, as he well might, 'I say to you, just as I say to your daughter, if you be proud there's no force.'

" 'But what has this to do with you, Shane ?' asked Andy Morrow ; 'sure we wanted to hear an account of *your* wedding, but instead of that, it's Dick Cuillenan's history you're giving us.'

" 'That's just it,' said Shane ; 'sure, only for this same Dick, I'd never get Mary Finigan for a wife. Dick took Susy's advice, bekase, after all, the undacent drop was in him, or he'd never have brought the bottle out of the house at all ; but, faith he riz up, put the whiskey in his pocket, and went home with a face on him as black as my hat with venom. Well, things passed on till the Christmas following, when one night, after the Finigans had all gone to bed, there comes a crowd of fellows to the door, thumping at it with great violence, and swearing that if the people within wouldn't open it immediately, it would be smashed into smithereens. The family, of coorse, were all alarmed ; but somehow or other, Susy herself got suspicious that it might be something about Mary ; so up she gets, and sends the daughter to her own bed, and lies down herself in the daughter's.

" In the mane time, Finigan got up, and after lighting a candle, opened the door at once. 'Come, Finigan,' says a strange voice, 'put out the candle, except you wish us to make a candlestick of the thatch,' says he—'or to give you a prod of a bagnet under the ribs,' says he.

* Cows without horns.

† Esker ; a high ridge of land, generally barren and unproductive, when upon a small scale. It is also a ridgy height that runs for many miles through a country.

“It was a folly for one man to go to bell-the-cat with a whole crowd; so he blew the candle out, and next minute they rushed in, and went as straight as a rule to Mary's bed. The mother all the time lay close, and never said a word. At any rate, what could be expected, only that, do what she could, at the long-run she must go? So, accordingly, after a very hard battle on her side, being a powerful woman, she was obliged to travel—but not till she had left many of them marks to remember her by; among the rest, Dick himself got his nose split on his face, with the stroke of a churn-staff, so that he carried half a nose on each cheek till the day of his death. Still there was very little spoke, for they didn't wish to betray themselves on any side. The only thing that Finigan could hear, was my name repeated several times, as if the whole thing was going on under my direction; for Dick thought, that if there was any one in the parish likely to be set down for it, it was me.

“When Susy found they were for putting her behind one of them, on a horse, she rebelled again, and it took near a dozen of boys to hoist her up; but one vagabone of them, that had a rusty broad-sword in his hand, gave her a skelp with the flat side of it, that subdued her at once, and off they went. Now, above all nights in the year, who should be dead but my own full cousin, Denis Fadh—God be good to him!—and I, and Jack, and Dan, his brothers, while bringing home whiskey for the wake and berrin, met them on the road. At first we thought them distant relations coming to the wake, but when I saw only one woman among the set, and she mounted on a horse, I began to suspect that all wasn't right. I accordingly turned back a bit, and walked near enough without their seeing me to hear the discourse, and discover the whole business. In less than no time I was back at the wake-house, so I up and tould them what I saw, and off we set, about forty of us, with good cudgels, scythe-sneda, and flails, fully bent to bring her back from them, come or go what would. And troth, sure enough, we did it; and I was the man myself, that rode afore the mother on the same horse that carried her off.

“From this out, when and wherever I got an opportunity, I whispered the soft nonsense, Nancy, into poor Mary's ear, until I put my *comodher** on her, and she couldn't live at all without me. But I was something for a woman to look at then, any how, standing six feet two in my stocking soles, which, you know, made them call me Shane *Fadh* †. At that time I had a decent farm of fourteen acres in Crocknagooran—the same that my son, Ned, has at the present time; and though, as to wealth, by no manner of manes fit to compare with the Finigans, yet, upon the whole, she might have made a worse match. The father, however, wasn't for me; but the mother was: so after drinking a bottle or two with the mother, Sarah Traynor, her cousin, and Mary, along with Jack Donnellan on my part, in their own barn, unknownst to the father, we agreed to make a runaway match of it, and appointed my uncle Brian Slevin's as the house we'd go to. The next Sunday was the day ap-

* *Comodher*—come hither—alluding to the burden of an old love-charm which is still used by the young of both sexes on May-morning. It is a literal translation of the Irish word “gutho.”

† *Fadh* is tall, or long.

pointed; so I had my uncle's family prepared, and sent two gallons of whiskey, to be there before us, knowing that neither the Finigans nor my own friends liked stinginess.

"Well, well, after all, the world is a strange thing—it's myself hardly knows what to make of it. It's I that did doat night and day upon that girl; and indeed there was them that could have seen me in Jimmaiky for her sake, for she was the beauty of the country, not to say of the parish, for a girl in her station. For my part, I could neither ate nor sleep, for thinking that she was so soon to be my own married wife, and to live under my roof. And when I'd think of it, how my heart would bounce to my throat, with downright joy and delight! The mother had made us promise not to meet till Sunday, for fraid of the father becoming suspicious: but, if I was to be shot for it, I couldn't hinder myself from going every night to the great flowering whitethorn that was behind their garden; and although she knew I hadn't promised to come, yet there she still was; something, she said, tould her I *would* come.

"The next Sunday we met at *Althadhawan* wood, and I'll never forget what I felt when I was going to the green at St. Patrick's Chair, where the boys and girls meet on Sunday: but there she was—the bright eyes dancing with joy in her head to see me. We spent the evening in the wood, till it was dusk—I bating them all leaping, dancing, and throwing the stone; for, by my song, I thought I had the action of ten men in me; she looking on, and smiling like an angel, when I'd lave them miles behind me. As it grew dusk, they all went home, except herself and me, and a few more who, maybe, had something of the same kind on hands.

"'Well, Mary,' says I, 'a-cushla-machree, it's dark enough for us to go; and, in the name of God, let us be off.'

"The crathur looked into my face, and got pale—for she was very young then: 'Shane,' says she, and she thrimbled like an aspen lafe, 'I'm going to trust myself with you for ever—for ever, Shane, avourneen,'—and her sweet voice broke into purty murmurs as she spoke; 'whether for happiness or sorrow God he only knows. I can bear poverty and distress, sickness and want with you, but I can't bear to think that you should ever forget to love me as you do now; or that your heart should ever cool to me: but I'm sure,' says she, 'you'll never forget this night, and the solemn promises you made me, before God and the blessed skies above us.'

"We were sitting at the time under the shade of a rowan-tree, and I had only one answer to make—I pulled her to my breast, where she laid her head and cried like a child, with her cheek against mine. My own eyes wern't dry, although I felt no sorrow, but—but—I never forgot that night—and I never will."

He now paused a few minutes, being too much affected to proceed.

"Poor Shane," said Nancy, in a whisper to Andy Morrow, "night and day he's thinking about that woman; she's now dead going on a year, and you would think by him, although he bears up very well before company, that she died only yestherday—but indeed it's he that was always the kind-hearted, affectionate man; and a better husband never broke bread."

"Well," said Shane, resuming the story, and clearing his voice, "it's great consolation to me, now that she's gone, to think that I never broke the promise I made her that night; for as I told you, except in regard of the duck-egg a bitter word never passed between us. I was in a passion then, for a wonder, and bent on showing her that I was a dangerous man to provoke; so just to give her a *spice* of what I could do, I made *Larry* feel it—and may God forgive me for raising my hand even then to her. But sure he would be a brute that would beat such a woman except by proxy. When it was clear dark we set off, and after crossing the country for two miles, reached my uncle's, where a great many of my friends were expecting us. As soon as we came to the door I struck it two or three times, for that was the sign, and my aunt came out, and taking Mary in her arms, kissed her, and, with a thousand welcomes, brought us both in.

"You all know that the best of aiting and dhrinking is provided when a runaway couple is expected; and indeed there was *galore** of both there. My uncle and all that were within welcomed us again; and many a good song and hearty jug of punch was sent round that night. The next morning my uncle went to her father's, and broke the business to him at once: indeed it wasn't very hard to do, for I believe it reached him afore he saw my uncle at all; so she was brought home † that day, and, on the Thursday night after, I, my father, uncle, and several other friends, went there, and made the match. She had sixty guineas, that her grand-father left her, thirteen head of cattle, two feather, and two chaff beds, with sheeting, quilts, and blankets; three pieces of bleached linez, and a flock of geese of her own rearing—upon the whole, among ourselves, it wasn't aisy to get such a fortune.

"Well, the match was made, and the wedding-day appointed; but there was one thing still to be managed, and that was how to get over the *standing* at mass on Sunday, to make satisfaction for the scandal we gave the church by running away with one another—but that's all stuff, for who care's a pin about standing, when three halves of the parish are married in the same way! The only thing that vexed me was, that it would keep back the wedding-day. However, her father and my uncle went to the priest, and spoke to him, trying, of coorse, to get us off of it, but he knew we were fat geese, and was in for giving us a plucking.—Hut, tut!—he wouldn't hear of it at all, not he; for although he would ride fifty miles to sarve either of us, he couldn't brake the new orders that he had got only a few days before that from the bishop. No; we must *stand* ‡—for it would be setting a bad example to the parish; and if

* Galore—more than enough—great abundance.

† One-half, at least, of the marriages in a great portion of Ireland are effected in this manner. They are termed "runaway matches," and are attended with no disgrace. When the parents of the girl come to understand that she has "gone off," they bring her home in a day or two; the friends of the parties then meet, and the arrangements for the marriage are made as described in the tale.

‡ Matches made in this manner are discountenanced by the Roman Catholic clergy, as being liable to abuse; and, for this reason, the parties, by way of punishment, are sometimes, but not always, made to stand up at mass for one or three Sundays; but, as Shane expresses it, the punishment is so common that it completely loses its effect. To "stand," in the sense meant here is this: the priest, when the whole congregation are on their knees, calls the young

he would let us pass, how could he punish the rest of his flock, when they'd be guilty of the same thing?

"Well, well, your Reverence," says my uncle, winking at her father 'if that's the case it can't be helped, any how—they must only stand, as many a dacent father and mother's child has done before them, and will again, please God—your Reverence is right in doing your duty.'

"True for you, Brian," says his Reverence, 'and yet, God knows, there's no man in the parish would be sorrier to see such a dacent, comely, young couple put upon a level with all the scrubs of the parish; and I know, Jemmy Finigan, it would go hard with your young, bashful daughter to get through with it, having the eyes of the whole congregation staring on her.'

"Why, then, your Reverence, as to that," says my uncle, who was just as stiff as the other was stout, 'the bashfullest of them will do more nor that to get a husband.'

"But you tell me," says the priest, 'that the wedding-day is fixed upon; how will you manage there?'

"Why, put it off for three Sundays longer, to be sure," says the uncle.

"But you forget this, Brian," says the priest, 'that good luck or prosperity never attends the putting off of a wedding.'

"Now here you see is where the priest had them; for they knew that as well as his Reverence himself—so they were in a puzzle again.

"It's a disagreeable business," says the priest, 'but the truth is, I could get them off with the bishop, only for one thing—I owe him five guineas of altar-money, and I'm so far back in dues that I'm not able to pay him. If I could inclose this to him in a letter, I would get them off at once, although it would be bringing myself into trouble with the parish afterwards; but, at all events,' says he, 'I wouldn't make every one of you both—so, to prove that I wish to sarve you, I'll sell the best cow in my byre, and pay him myself, rather than their wedding-day should be put off, poor things, or themselves brought to any bad luck—the Lord keep them from it!'

"While he was speaking, he stamped his foot two or three times on the flure, and the housekeeper came in.—'Katty,' says he, 'bring us in a bottle of whiskey; at all events, I can't let you away,' says he, 'without tasting something, and drinking luck to the young folks.'

"In troth," says Jemmy Finigan, 'and begging your Reverence's pardon, the sorra cow you'll sell this bout, any how, on account of me or my childhre, bekase I'll lay down on the nail what'll clear you wid the bishop; and in the name of goodness, as the day is fixed and all, let the crathurs not be disappointed.'

"Jemmy," says my uncle, 'if you go to that, you'll pay but your share, for I insist upon laying down one half, at laste.'

"At any rate they came down with the cash, and after drinking a

man and woman by name, who stand up and remain under the gaze of the congregation whilst he rebukes them for the scandal they gave to the church, after which they kneel down. In general it is looked upon more as fun than punishment. Sometimes, however, the wealthier classes compromise the matter with the priest, as described above.

bottle between them, went home in choice spirits entirely at their good luck in so easily getting us off. When they had left the house a bit, the priest sent after them—'Jemmy,' says he to Finigan, 'I forgot a circumstance, and that is, to tell you that I will go and marry them at your own house, and bring Father James, my curate, with me.' 'Oh, wurrah, no,' said both, 'don't mention *that*, your Reverence, except you wish to break their hearts, out and out! why, that would be a thousand times worse nor making them stand to do penance: doesn't your Reverence know, that if they hadn't the pleasure of *running for the bottle*, the whole wedding wouldn't be worth three half-pence?' 'Indeed, I forgot that, Jemmy.' 'But sure,' says my uncle, 'your Reverence and Father James must be at it, whether or not—for that we intended from the first.' 'Tell them, I'll run for the bottle too,' says the priest, laughing, 'and will make some of them look sharp, never fear.'

"Well, by my song, so far all was right; and may be it's we that wern't glad—maning Mary and myself—that there was nothing more in the way to put off the wedding-day. So, as the bridegroom's share of the expense always is to provide the whiskey, I'm sure, for the honour and glory of taking the blooming young crathur from the great lot of bachelors that were all breaking their hearts about her, I couldn't do less nor finish the thing decently; knowing, besides, the high doings that the Finigans would have of it—for they were always looked upon as a family that never had their heart in a trifle, when it would come to the push. So, you see, I and my brother Mickey, my cousin Tom, and Dom'nick Nulty, went up into the mountains to Tim Cassidy's still-house, where we spent a glorious day, and bought fifteen gallons of stuff, that one drop of it would bring the tear, if possible, to a young widdy's eye that had berried a bad husband. Indeed, this was at my father's bidding, who wasn't a bit behindhand with any of them in cutting a dash. 'Shane,' says he to me, 'you know the Finigans of ould, that they won't be contint with what would do another, and that, except they go beyant the thing, entirely, they won't be satisfied. They'll have the whole countryside at the wedding, and we must let them see that we have a spirit and a faction of our own,' says he, 'that we needn't be ashamed of. They've got all kinds of ateables in cart-loads, and as we're to get the drinkables, we must see and give as good as they'll bring. I myself, and your mother, will go round and invite all we can think of, and let you and Mickey go up the hills to Tim Cassidy, and get fifteen gallons of whiskey, for I don't think less will do us.'

"This we accordingly complied with, as I said, and surely better stuff never went down the *red lane* * than the same whiskey; for the people knew nothing about watering it then, at all at all. The next thing I did was to get a fine shop cloth coat, a pair of top-boots, and buck-skin breeches fit for a squire; along with a new Caroline hat that would throw off the wet like a duck. Mat Kavanagh, the schoolmaster from Findramore bridge, lent me his watch for the occasion, after my spending near two days learning from him to know what o'clock it was. At last, some-

* Humorous periphrasis for throat.

how, I mastered that point so well, that in a quarter of an hour at least, I could give a decent guess at the time upon it.

“ Well, at last the day came. The wedding morning, or the bride's part of it *, as they say, was beautiful. It was then the month of July. The evening before, my father and my brother went over to Jemmy Finigan's, to make the regulations for the wedding. We, that is my party, were to be at the bride's house about ten o'clock, and we were then to proceed, all on horseback, to the priest's, to be married. We were then, after drinking something at Tom Hance's public-house, to come back as far as the Dumbhill, where we were to start and run for the bottle. That morning we were all up at the shriek of day. From six o'clock, my own faction, friends and neighbours, began to come, all mounted; and about eight o'clock there was a whole regiment of them, some on horses, some on mules, others on raheries † and asses; and, by my word, I believe little Dick Snudaghan, the tailor's apprentice, that had a hand in making my wedding-clothes, was mounted upon a buck goat, with a bridle of salvages tied to his horns. Anything at all, to keep their feet from the ground; for nobody would be allowed to go with the wedding that hadn't some animal between them and the earth.

“ To make a long story short, so large a bridegroom's party was never seen in that country before, save and except Tim Lannigan's, that I mentioned just now. It would make you split your face laughing to see the figure they cut; some of them had saddles and bridles—others had saddles and halthers: some had back-suggawns of straw, with hay stirrups to them, but good bridles; others had sacks filled up as like saddles as they could make them, girthed with hay-ropes five or six times tied round the horse's body. When one or two of the horses wouldn't carry double, except the hind rider sat strideways, the women had to be put foremost, and the men behind them. Some had decent pillions enough, but most of them had none at all, and the women were obliged to sit where the pillion ought to be—and a hard card they had to play to keep their seats even when the horses walked asy, so what must it be when they came to a gallop! but that same was nothing at all to a trot.

“ From the time they began to come that morning, you may be certain that the glass was no cripple, any how—although, for fear of accidents, we took care not to go too deep. At eight o'clock we sat down to a rousing breakfast, for we thought it best to eat a trifle at home, lest they might think that what we were to get at the bride's breakfast might be thought any novelty. As for my part, I was in such a state, that I couldn't let a morsel cross my throat, nor did I know what end of me was uppermost. After breakfast they all got their cattle, and I my hat and whip, and was ready to mount, when my uncle whispered to me that I must kneel down and ax my father and mother's blessing, and forgiveness for all my disobedience and offences towards them—and also to requist the blessing of my brothers and sisters. Well, in a short time I

* The morning, or early part of the day, on which an Irish couple are married, up until noon, is called the bride's part, which, if the fortunes of the pair are to be happy, is expected to be fair—rain or storm being considered indicative of future calamity.

† A small, shaggy pony, so called from being found in great numbers on the Island of that name.

was down; and my goodness! such a hullabaloo of crying as was there in a minute's time! 'Oh, Shane Fadh—Shane Fadh, a cushla machree!' says my poor mother in Irish, 'you're going to break up the ring about your father's hearth and mine—going to lave us, avourneen, for ever, and we to hear your light foot and sweet voice, morning, noon, and night, no more! Oh!' says she, 'it's you that was the good son all out; and the good brother, too: kind and cheerful was your voice, and full of love and affection was your heart! Shane, avourneen deelish, if ever I was harsh to you, forgive your poor mother, that will never see you more on her flure as one of her own family.'

"Even my father, that wasn't much given to crying, couldn't speak, but went over to a corner and cried till the neighbours stopped him. As for my brothers and sisters, they were all in an uproar; and I myself, cried like a Trojan, merely bekase I see them at it. My father and mother both kissed me, and gave me their blessing; and my brothers and sisters did the same, while you'd think all their hearts would break. 'Come, come,' says my uncle, 'I'll have none of this: what a hubbub you make, and your son going to be well married—going to be joined to a girl that your betters would be proud to get into connexion with. You should have more sense, Rose Campbell—you ought to thank God that he had the luck to come across such a colleen for a wife; that it's not going to his grave, instead of into the arms of a purty girl—and what's better, a good girl. So quit your blubbering, Rose; and you, Jack,' says he to my father, 'that ought to have more sense, stop this instant. Clear off, every one of you, out of this, and let the young boy go to his horse.—Clear out, I say, or by the powers I'll—look at them three stags of huzzies; by the hand of my body they're blubbering bekase it's not their own story this blessed day. Move—bounce!—and you, Rose Oge, if you're not behind Dudley Fulton in less than no time, by the hole of my coat, I'll marry a wife myself, and then where will the twenty guineas be that I'm to lave you?'

"God rest his soul, and yet there was a tear in his eye all the while—even in spite of his joking!

"Any how, it's easy knowing that there wasn't sorrow at the bottom of their grief: for they were all now laughing at my uncle's jokes, even while their eyes were red with the tears: my mother herself couldn't but be in a good humour, and join her smile with the rest.

"My uncle now drove us all out before him; not, however, till my mother had sprinkled a drop of holy water on each of us, and given me and my brothers and sisters a small taste of blessed candle, to prevent us from sudden death and accidents*.—My father and she didn't come with us then, but they went over to the bride's while we were all gone to the priest's house. At last we set off in great style and spirits—I well mounted on a good horse of my own, and my brother on one that he had sorrowed from Peter Dannellon, fully bent on winning the bottle. I would have borrowed him myself, but I thought it dacenter to ride my

* In many parishes of Ireland a number of small wax candles are blessed by the priest upon Ash-Wednesday, and these are constantly worn about the person until that day twelve months, for the purposes mentioned above.

own horse manfully, even though he never won a side of mutton or a saddle, like Dannellon's. But the man that was most likely to come in for the bottle was little Billy Cormick, the tailor, who rode a blood-racer that young John Little had wickedly lent him for the special purpose; he was a tall bay animal, with long small legs, a switch tail, and didn't know how to trot. Maybe we didn't cut a dash—and might have taken a town before us. Out we set about nine o'clock, and went across the country: but I'll not stop to mention what happened some of them, even before we got to the bride's house. It's enough to say here, that sometimes one in crassing a stile or ditch would drop into the *shough**; sometimes another would find himself head foremost on the ground; a woman would be cap-sized here in crassing a ridgy field, bringing her fore-rider to the ground along with her; another would be hanging like a broken arch, ready to come down, till some one would ride up and fix her on the seat. But as all this happened in going over the fields, we expected that when we'd get out on the king's highway there would be less danger, as we would have no ditches or drains to crass. When we came in sight of the house, there was a general shout of welcome from the bride's party, who were on the watch for us: we couldn't do less nor give them back the chorus; but we had better have let that alone, for some of the young horses took the *stadh*†, others of them capered about; the asses—the sorra choke them—that were along with us should begin to bray, as if it was the king's birthday—and a mule of Jack Irwin's took it into his head to stand stock still. This brought another dozen of them to the ground; so that, between one thing or another, we were near half an hour before we got on the march again. When the blood-horse that the tailor rode saw the crowd and heard the shouting, he cocked his ears, and set off with himself full speed; but before he had got far he was without a rider, and went galloping up to the bride's house, the bridle hangin' about his feet.—Billy, however, having taken a glass or two, wasn't to be cowed; so he came up in great blood, and swore he would ride him to America, sooner than let the bottle be won from the bridegroom's party.

“When we arrived, there was nothing but shaking hands and kissing, and all kinds of *slowsthering*—men kissing men—women kissing women—and after that men and women all through other. Another breakfast was ready for us; and here we all sat down; myself and my next relations in the bride's house, and the others in the barn and garden; for one house wouldn't hold the half of us. Eating, however, was all only talk: of course we took some of the poteen again, and in a short time afterwards set off along the paved road to the priest's house, to be tied as fast as he could make us, and that was fast enough. Before we went out to mount our horses though, there was just such a hullabaloo with the bride and her friends as there was with myself: but my uncle soon put a stop to it, and in five minutes had them breaking their hearts laughing.

“Bless my heart, what doings! what roasting and boiling!—and what tribes of beggars and shulers, and vagabonds of all sorts and sizes, were sunning themselves about the doors—wishing us a thousand times long

* Dyke or drain.

† Became restive.

life and happiness. There was a fiddler and piper: the piper was to stop in my father-in-law's while we were going to be married, to keep the neighbours that were met there shaking their toes while we were at the priest's; and the fiddler was to come with ourselves, in order, you know, to have a dance at the priest's house, and to play for us coming and going; for there's nothing like a taste of music when one's *on* for sport. As we were setting off, ould Mary M'Quade from Kilnahushogue, who was sent for becase she understood charms, and had the name of being lucky, tuck myself aside: 'Shane Fadh,' says she, 'you're a young man well to look upon; may God bless you and keep you so; and there's not a doubt but there's them here that wishes you ill—that would rather be in your shoes this blessed day, with your young *colleen bawn*,* that'll be your wife before the sun sets, plase the heavens. There's ould Fanny Barton, the wrinkled thief of a hag, that the Finigans axed here for the sake of her decent son-in-law, who ran away with her daughter Betty, that was the great beauty some years ago: her breath's not good, Shane, and many a strange thing's said of her. Well, maybe, I know more about *that* nor I'm going to minton, any how: more betoken that it's not for nothing the white hare haunts the shrubbery behind her house.'

"But what harm could she do me, Sony Mary?' says I—for she was called Sony—'we have often sarved her one way or other.'

"Ax me no questions about her, Shane,' says she, 'don't I know what she did to Ned Donnelly, that was to be pitied, if ever a man was to be pitied, for as good as seven months after his marriage, until I relieved him; 'twas gone to a thread he was, and didn't they pay me decently for my throuble!'

"Well, and what am I to do, Mary?' says I, knowing very well that what she *sad* was thurue enough, although I didn't wish her to see that I was afeard.

"Why,' says she, 'you must first exchange money with me, and then, if you do as I bid you, you may lave the rest to myself.'

"I then took out, begad, a daicent lot of silver—say a crown or so—for my blood was up, and the money was flush—and gave it to her; for which I got a *cronagh-bawn* † half-penny in exchange.

"Now,' says she, 'Shane, you must keep this in your company, and for your life and sowl, don't part with it for nine days after your marriage; but there's more to be done,' says she—'hould out your right knee;' so with this she unbuttoned three buttons of my buck-skins, and made me loose the knot of my garther on the right leg. 'Now,' says she, 'if you keep them loose till after the priest says the words, and won't let the money I gave you go out of your company for nine days, along with something else I'll do that you're to know nothing about, there's no fear of all their *pishthrogas* ‡.' She then pulled off her right shoe, and threw it after us for luck.

* Fair girl.

† So called from Cronbane, in the county of Wicklow, where there is a copper mine.

‡ Charms of an evil nature. These are ceremonies used by such women, and believed to be of efficacy by the people. It is an undoubted fact that the woman here named—and truly named—was called in by honest Ned Donnelly, who, I believe, is alive, and could confirm the truth of it. I remember her well, as I do the occasion on which she was called in by

"We were now all in motion once more—the bride riding behind my man, and the bridesmaid behind myself—a fine bouncing girl she was, but not to be mentioned in the one year with my own darlin'—in troth, it wouldn't be aisy getting such a couple as we were the same day, though it's myself that says it. Mary, dressed in a black castor hat, like a man's, a white muslin coat, with a scarlet silk handkercher about her neck, with a silver buckle and a blue ribbon, for luck, round her waist; her fine hair wasn't turned up, at all at all, but hung down in beautiful curls on her shoulders; her eyes you would think, were all light; her lips as plump and as ripe as cherries—and maybe it's myself that wasn't to that time o' day without tasting them, any how; and her teeth, so even, and as white as a burned bone. The day bate all for beauty; I don't know whether it was from the lightness of my own spirit it came, but, I think, that such a day I never saw from that to this; indeed, I thought every thing was dancing and smiling about me, and sartinly every one said, that such a couple hadn't been married, nor such a wedding seen in the parish for maun a long year before.

"All the time, as we went along, we had the music; but then at first we were mightily puzzled what to do with the fiddler. To put him as a hind rider it would prevent him from playing, bekase how could he keep the fiddle before him and another so close to him? To put him foremost was as bad, for he couldn't play and hould the bridle together; so at last my uncle proposed that he should get behind himself, turn his face to the horse's tail, and saw away like a Trojan.

"It might be about four miles or so to the priest's house, and, as the day was fine, we got on gloriously. One thing, however, became troublesome; you see there was a cursed set of ups and downs on the road, and as the riding *coutrements* were so bad with a great many of the wed-diners, those that had no saddles, going down steep places, would work onward bit by bit, in spite of all they could do, till they'd be fairly on the horse's neck, and the women behind them would be on the animal's shoulders; and it required nice managing to balance themselves, for they might as well sit on the edge of a dale board. Many of them got tosses this way, though it all passed in good humour. But no two among the whole set were more puzzled by this, than my uncle and the fiddler—I think I see my uncle this minute with his knees sticking into the horse's shoulders, and his two hands upon his neck, keeping himself back, with a *cruiht** upon him, and the fiddler with his heels away, towards the horse's tail, and he stretched back against my uncle, for all the world like two bricks laid against one another, and one of them falling. 'Twas the same thing going up a hill; whoever was behind, would be hanging over the horse's tail, with the arm about the fore-rider's neck or body, and the

Ned or his friends. I also remember that a neighbour of ours, a tailor named Cormick M'Elroy—father, by the way, to little Billy Cormick, who figures so conspicuously at the wedding—called her in to cure, by the force of charms, some cows he had that were sick.

* The bump, which constitutes a round-shouldered man. If the reader has ever seen Hogarth's Illustrations of Hudibras, and remembers the redoubtable hero as he sits on horse-back, he will be at no loss in comprehending what a *cruiht* means. *Cruiht* is the Irish for harp, and the simile is taken from the projection between the shoulders of the harper which was caused by carrying that instrument.

other houlding the baste by the mane, to keep them both from sliding off backwards. Many a come-down there was among them—but as I said, it was all in good humour; and, accordingly, as regularly as they fell, they were sure to get a cheer.

“When we got to the Priest’s house, there was a hearty welcome for us all. The bride and I, with our next kindred and friends, went into the parlour: along with these, there was a set of young fellows, who had been bachelors of the bride’s, that got in with an intention of getting the first kiss* and, in coorse, of bateing myself out of it. I got a whisper of this; so by my song, I was determined to cut them all out in that, as well as I did in getting herself; but you know, I couldn’t be angry, even if they had got the foreway of me in it, becase it’s an ould custom.—While the priest was going over the business, I kept my eye about me, and, sure enough, there were seven or eight fellows all waiting to snap at her. When the ceremony drew near a close, I got up on one leg, so that I could bounce to my feet like lightning, and when it was finished, I got her in my arm, before you could say Jack Robinson, and swinging her behind the priest, gave her the husband’s first kiss. The next minute there was a rush after her; but, as I had got the first, it was but fair that they should come in according as they could, I thought, becase, you know it was all in the coorse of practice; but, hould, there were two words † be said to that, for what does Father Dollard do, but shoves them off, and a fine stout shoulder he had—shoves them off, like childre, and getting his arms about Mary, gives her half a dozen smacks at least—oh, consuming to the one less—that mine was only a *cracker* ‡ to. The rest, then, all kissed her, one after another, according as they could come in to get one. We then went straight to his Reverence’s barn, which had been cleared out for us the day before, by his own directions, where we danced for an hour or two, his Reverence and his Curate along with us.

“When this was over we mounted again, the fiddler taking his ould situation behind my uncle. You know it is usual, after getting the knot tied, to go to a public-house or *shebeen*. to get some refreshment after the journey; so, accordingly, we went to little lame Larry Spooney’s—grand-father to him that was transported the other day for staling Bob Beaty’s sheep; he was called Spooney himself, for his sheep-stealing, ever since Paddy Keenan made the song upon him, ending with ‘his house never wants a good ram-horn spoon;’ so that let people say what they will, these things run in the blood—well, we went to his shebeen house, but the tithe of us couldn’t get into it; so we sot on the green before the door, and, by my song, we *took* ‡ dacently with *him*, any how; and, only for my uncle, it’s odds but we would have been all fuddled.

“It was now that I began to notish a kind of coolness between my

* There is always a struggle for this at an Irish wedding, where every man is at liberty—even the priest himself—to anticipate the bridegroom if he can.

† Cracker is the small, hard cord which is tied to a rustic whip, in order to make it crack. When a man is considered to be inferior to another in anything, the people say, “he wouldn’t make a cracker to his whip.”

‡ Drank.

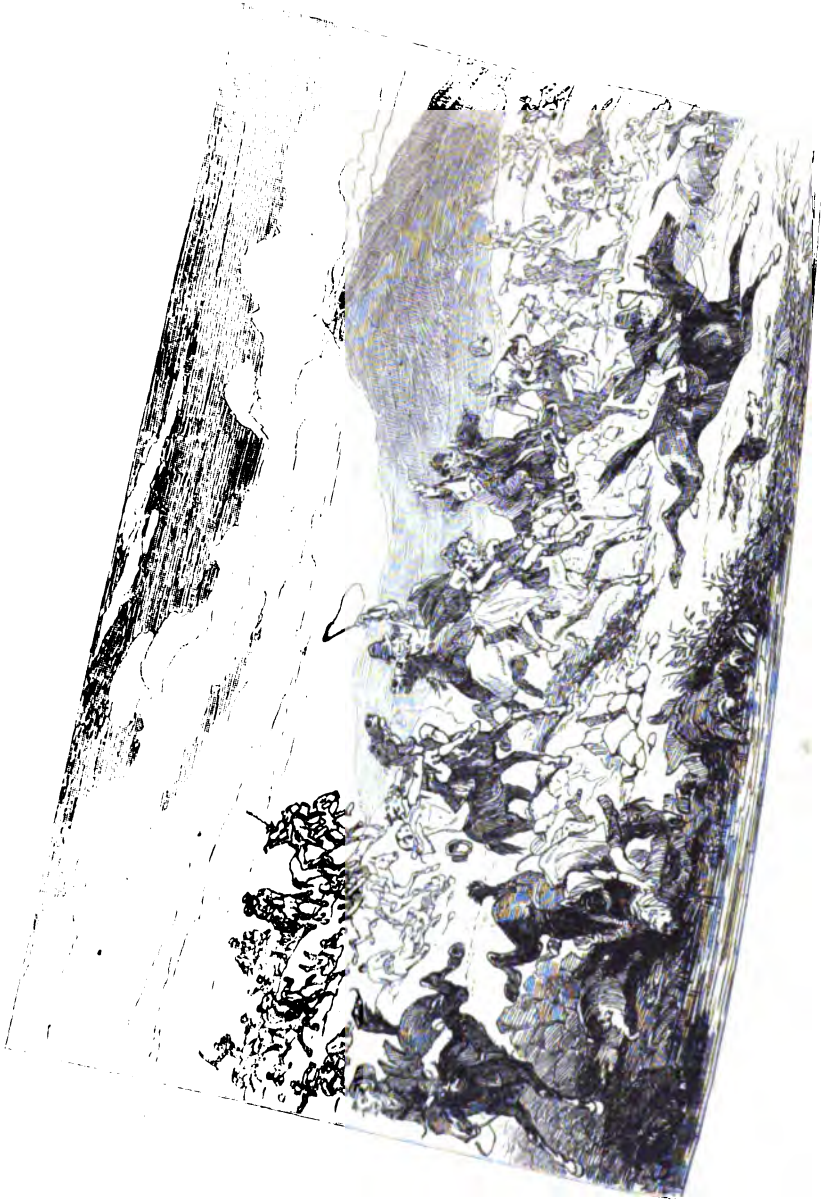
party and the bride's, and for some time I didn't know what to make of it—I wasn't long so, however; for my uncle, who still had his eye about him, comes over to me, and says, 'Shane, I doubt there will be bad work amongst these people, particularly betwixt the Dorans and the Flanagans—the truth is, that the old business of the law-shoot will break out, and except they're kept from drink, take my word for it, there will be blood spilled. The running for the bottle will be a good excuse,' says he, 'so I think we had better move home before they go too far in the drink.'

"Well, any way, there was truth in this; so, accordingly, the reckoning was *ped*, and, as this was the thrate of the weddiners to the bride and bridegroom, every one of the men clubbed his share, but neither I nor the girls, anything. Ha—ha—ha! Am I alive at all? I never—ha—ha—ha—!—I never laughed so much in one day as I did in that, and I can't help laughing at it yet. Well, well! when we all got on the top of our horses, and sich other iligant cattle as we had—the crowning of a king was nothing to it. We were now purty well I thank you, as to liquor; and, as the knot was tied, and all safe, there was no end to our good spirits; so, when we took the road, the men were in high blood, particularly Billy Cormick, the tailor, who had a pair of long cavalry spurs upon him, that he was scarcely able to walk in—and he not more nor four feet high. The women, too, were in blood, having faces upon them, with the hate of the day and the liquor, as full as trumpeters'.

"There was now a great jealousy among them that were bint for winning the bottle; and when one horseman would cross another, striving to have the whip hand of him when they'd set off, why you see, his horse would get a cut of the whip itself for his pains. My uncle and I, however, did all we could to pacify them; and their own bad horsemanship, and the screeching of the women, prevented any strokes at that time. Some of them were ripping up ould sores against one another as they went along; others, particularly the youngsters, with their sweethearts behind them, coorting away for the life of them, and some might be heard miles off, singing and laughing; and you may be sure the fiddler behind my uncle wasn't idle, no more nor another. In this way we dashed on gloriously, till we came in sight of the Dumb-hill, where we were to start for the bottle. And now you might see the men fixing themselves on their saddles, sacks and saggans; and the women tying kerchiefs and shawls about their caps and bcnnets, to keep them from flying off, and then gripping their fore-riders hard and fast by the bosoms. When we got to the Dumb-hill, there were five or six fellows that didn't come with us to the priest's, but met us with cudgels in their hands, to prevent any of them from starting before the others, and to show fair play.

"Well, when they were all in a lump,—horses, mules, raheries, and asses—some, as I said, with saddles, some with none; and all just as I tould you before;—the word was given and off they scoured, myself along with the rest; and divil be off me, if ever I saw such another sight but itself before or since. Off they skelped through thick and thin, in a cloud of dust like a mist about us: but it was a mercy that the life wasn't trampled out of some of us; for before we had gone fifty perches, the one





The race for the battle.

THE RACE FOR THE BATTLE.

third of them were sprawling a-top of one another on the road. As for the women, they went down right and left—sometimes bringing the horsemen with them; and many of the boys getting black eyes and bloody noses on the stones. Some of them, being half blind with the motion and the whiskey, turned off the wrong way, and galloped on, thinking they had completely distanced the crowd; and it wasn't until they cooled a bit that they found out their mistake.

“But the best sport of all was, when they came to the *Lasy Corner*, just at Jack Gallagher's *flush*,* where the water came out a good way across the road; being in such a flight, they either forgot or didn't know how to turn the angle properly, and splash went above thirty of them, coming down right on the top of one another, souse in the pool. By this time there was about a dozen of the best horsemen a good distance before the rest, cutting one another up for the bottle: among these were the Dorans and Flanagans; but they, you see, wisely enough, dropped their women at the beginning, and only rode single. I myself didn't mind the bottle, but kept close to Mary, for fraid that among sich a devil's pack of half-mad fellows, anything might happen her. At any rate, I was next the first batch: but where do you think the tailor was all this time? Why away off like lightning, miles before them—flying like a swallow: and how he kept his sate so long has puzzled me from that day to this; but, any how, truth's best—there he was topping the hill ever so far before them. After all, the unlucky crathur nearly missed the bottle; for when he turned to the bride's house, instead of pulling up as he ought to do—why, to show his horsemanship to the crowd that was out looking at them, he should begin to cut up the horse right and left, until he made him take the garden ditch in full flight, landing him among the cabbages. About four yards or five from the spot where the horse lodged himself was a well, and a purty deep one, by my word; but not a sowl present could tell what become of the tailor, until Owen Smith chanced to look into the well, and saw his long spurs just above the water; so he was pulled up in a purty pickle, not worth the washing; but what did he care? although he had a small body, the sorra one of him but had a sowl big enough for Goliath or Sampson the Great.

“As soon as he got his eyes clear, right or wrong, he insisted on getting the bottle: but he was late, poor fellow, for before he got out of the garden, two of them comes up—Paddy Doran and Peter Flanagan, cutting one another to pieces, and not the length of your nail between them. Well, well, that was a terrible day, sure enough. In the twinkling of an eye they were both off the horses, the blood streaming from their bare heads, struggling to take the bottle from my father, who didn't know which of them to give it to. He knew if he'd hand it to one, the other would take offence, and then he was in a great puzzle, striving to reason with them; but long Paddy Doran caught it while he was spaking to Flanagan, and the next instant Flanagan measured him with a heavy loaded whip, and left him stretched upon the stones.—And now the work

* Flush is a pool of water that spreads nearly across a road. It is usually fed by a small mountain stream, and in consequence of rising and falling rapidly, it is called “Flush.”

began: for by this time the friends of both parties came up and joined them. Such knocking down, such roaring among the men, and screeching and clapping of hands and wiping of heads among the women, when a brother, or a son, or a husband would get his gruel! Indeed, out of a fair, I never saw any thing to come up to it. But during all this work, the busiest man among the whole set was the tailor, and what was worst of all for the poor crathur, he should single himself out against both parties, becase you see he thought they were cutting him out of his right to the bottle.

"They had now broken up the garden gate for weapons, all except one of the posts, and fought into the garden; when nothing should sarve Billy, but to take up the large heavy post, as if he could destroy the whole faction on each side. Accordingly he came up to big Matthew Flanagan, and was rising it just as if he'd fell him, when Matt, catching him by the nape of the neck, and the waistband of the breeches, went over very quietly, and dropped him a second time, heels up, into the well; where he might have been yet, only for my mother-in-law, who dragged him out with a great deal to do: for the well was too narrow to give him room to turn.

"As for myself and all my friends, as it happened to be my own wedding, and at our own place, we couldn't take part with either of them; but we endeavoured all in our power to *red** them, and a tough task we had of it, until we saw a pair of whips going hard and fast among them, belonging to Father Corrigan and Father James, his curate. Well, its wonderful how soon a priest can clear up a quarrel! In five minutes there wasn't a hand up—instead of that they were ready to run into mice-holes:—

"'What, you murderers,' says his Reverence, 'are you bint to have each other's blood upon your heads; ye vile infidels, ye cursed unchristian Antherntarians?† are ye going to get yourself hanged like sheep-stalers? down with your sticks, I command you: do you know—will ye give yourselves time to see who's spaking to you—you bloodthirsty set of Episcopalians? I command you, in the name of the Catholic Church and the Blessed Virgin Mary to stop this instant, if you don't wish me,' says he, 'to turn you into stocks and stones where you stand, and make world's wonders of you as long as you live.—Doran, if you rise your hand more, I'll strike it dead on your body, and to your mouth you'll never carry it while you have breath in your carcass,' says he.—'Clear off, you Flanagans, you butchers you—or by St. Domnick I'll turn the heads round upon your bodies, in the twinkling of an eye, so that you'll not be able to look a quiet Christian in the face again. Pretty respect you have for the decent couple at whose house you have kicked up such a hubbub. Is this the way people are to be deprived of their dinners on your accounts, you fungaleering thieves!'

"'Why then, plase your Reverence, by the—hem—I say Fathor Corrigan, it wasn't my fault, but that villain Flanagan's, for he knows I fairly

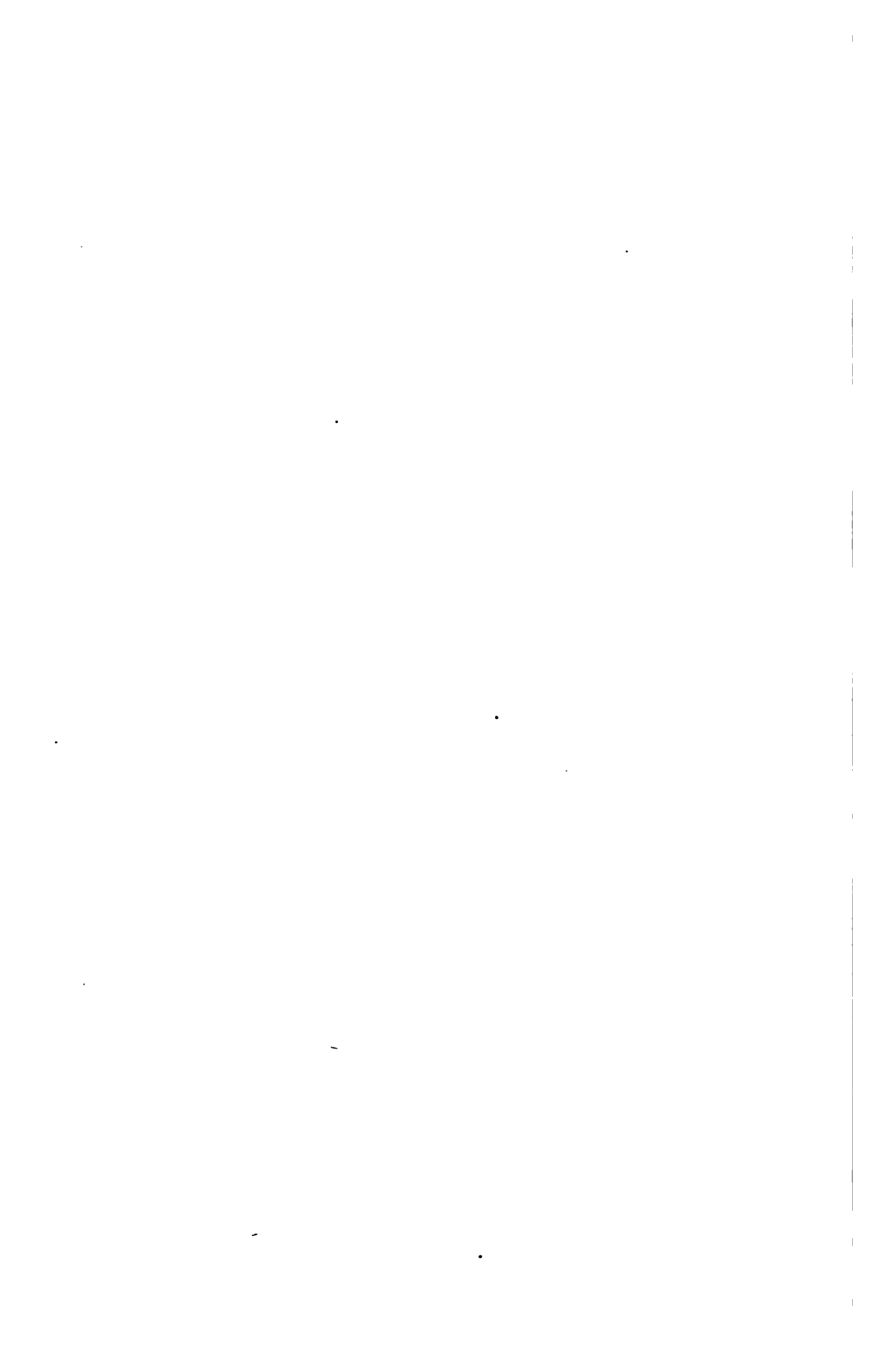
* Separate, or pacify.

† Antitrinitarians; the peasantry are often extremely fond of hard and long words, which they call *tall English*.



Mat O'Flanagan dropping Billy Corrick into the Well.

THE ILLUSTRATION
BY J. J. HARRIS



won the bottle—and would have distanced him, only that when I was far before him, the vagabone, he galloped across me on the way, thinking to thrip up the horse.

“ ‘You lying scoundrel,’ says the priest, ‘how dare you tell me a falsity,’ says he, ‘to my face? how could he gallop across you if you were far before him? Not a word more, or I’ll leave you without a mouth to your face, which will be a double share of provision and bacon saved any way. And Flanagan, *you* were as much to blame as he, and must be chastised for your raggamuffianly conduct,’ says he, ‘and so must you both, and all your party, particularly you and he, as the ringleaders. Right well I know it’s the grudge upon the lawsuit you had, and not the bottle, that occasioned it: but by St. Peter, to Loughderg both of you must tramp for this.’

“ ‘Ay, and by St. Pether, they both deserve it as well as a thief does the gallows,’ said a little blustering voice belonging to the tailor, who came forward in a terrible passion, looking for all the world like a drowned rat. ‘Ho, by St. Pether, they do, the vagabones; for it was myself that won the bottle, your Reverence; and by this and by that,’ says he, ‘the bottle I’ll have, or some of their crowns will crack for it: blood or whiskey I’ll have, your Reverence, and I hope that you’ll assist me.’

“ ‘Why, Billy, are you here?’ says Father Corrigan, smiling down upon the figure the little fellow cut, with his long spurs and his big whip; ‘what in the world tempted *you* to get on horseback, Billy?’

“ ‘By the powers, I was miles before them,’ says Billy; ‘and after this day, your Reverence, let no man say that I couldn’t ride a steeple-chase across Crocknagooran.’

“ ‘Why, Billy, how did you stick on at all, at all?’ says his Reverence.

“ ‘How do I know how I stuck on?’ says Billy, ‘nor whether I stuck on at all or not; all I know is, that I was on horseback leaving the Dumb-hill, and that I found them pulling me by the heels out of the well in the corner of the garden—and that, your Reverence, when the first was only topping the hill there below, as Lanty Magowran tells me, who was looking on.’

“ ‘Well, Billy,’ says Father Corrigan, ‘you must get the bottle; and as for you Dorans and Flanagans, I’ll make examples of you for this day’s work—that you may reckon on. You are a disgrace to the parish, and, what’s more, a disgrace to your priest. How can luck or grace attend the marriage of any young couple that there’s such work at? Before you leave this, you must all shake hands, and promise never to quarrel with each other while grass grows or water runs; and if you don’t, by the blessed St. Dominick, I’ll *ackimnicate** ye both, and all belonging to you into the bargain; so that ye’ll be the pitiful examples and shows to all that look upon you.’

“ ‘Well, well, your Reverence,’ says my father-in-law, ‘let all by-gones be by-gones; and please God, they will, before they go, be better friends than ever they were. Go now and clane yourselves, take the blood

* Excommunicate. It is generally pronounced as above by the people.

from about your faces, for the dinner's ready an hour ago; but if you all respect the place you're in, you'll show it, in regard of the young crathurs that's going, in the name of God, to face the world together, and of coorse wishes that this day at last should pass in pace and quietness: little did I think there was any friend or neighbour here that would make so little of the place or people, as was done for nothing at all, in the face of the country.'

" 'God he sees,' says my mother-in-law, 'that there's them here this day we didn't deserve this from, to rise such a *nostration*, as if the house was a shebeen or a public-house! It's myself didn't think either me or my poor coolleen here, not to mention the dacent people she's joined to, would be made so little of, as to have our place turned into a play-acthur—for a play-acthur couldn't be worse!'

" 'Well,' says my uncle, 'there's no help for spilt milk, I tell you, nor for spilt blood either: tare-an-ouny, sure we're all Irishmen, relations, and Catholics through other, and we oughtn't to be this way. Come away to the dinner—by the powers, we'll duck the first man that says a loud word for the remainder of the day. Come, Father Corrigan, and carve the goose, or the geese, for us—for, by my sannies, I believe there's a baker's dozen of them; but we've plenty of *Latin* for them, and your Reverence and Father James here understands that langidge, any how—larned enough there, I think, gentlemen.'

" 'That's right, Brian,' shouts the tailor—'that's right; there must be no fighting: by the powers, the first man attempts it, I'll brain him—fell him to the earth like an ox, if all belonging to him was in my way.'

" This threat from the tailor went farther, I think, in putting them into good humour nor even what the priest said. They then washed and claned themselves, and accordingly went to their dinners.—Billy himself marched with his terrible whip in his hand, and his long cavalry spurs sticking near ten inches behind him, dragged to the tail like a bantling cock after a shower. But, maybe, there was more dragged tails and bloody noses nor poor Billy's, or even nor was occasioned by the fight; for after Father Corrigan had come, several of them dodged up, some with broken shins and heads and wet clothes, that they'd got on the way by the mischances of the race, particularly at the *Flush*. But I don't know how it was; somehow the people in them days didn't value these things a straw. They were far hardier then nor they are now, and never went to law at all at all. Why, I've often known skulls to be broken, and the people to die afterwards, and there would be nothing more about it, except to brake another skull or two for it; but neither *crovener's quest*, nor judge, nor jury, was ever troubled at all about it. And so sign's on it, people were then innocent, and not up to law and counsellors as they are now. If a person happened to be killed in a fight at a fair or market, why he had only to appear after his death to one of his friends, and get a number of masses offered up for his sowl, and all was right; but now the times are clane altered, and there's nothing but hanging and transporting for such things; although that won't bring the people to life again."

" I suppose," said Andy Morrow, "you had a famous dinner. Shane?"

"'Tis you that may say that, Mr. Morrow," replied Shane: "but the house, you see, wasn't able to hould one half of us; so there was a dozen or two tables borrowed from the neighbours, and laid one after another in two rows, on the green, beside the river that ran along the garden-hedge, side by side. At one end Father Corrigan sat, with Mary and myself, and Father James at the other. There were three five-gallon kegs of whiskey, and I ordered my brother to take charge of them; and there he sat beside them, and filled the bottles as they were wanted—bekase, if he had left that job to strangers, many a spalpeen there would make away with lots of it. Mavrone, such a sight as the dinner was! I didn't lay my eye on the fellow of it since, sure enough, and I'm now an ould man, though I was then a young one. Why there was a pudding boiled in the end of a sack; and troth it was a thumper, only for the straws—for you see, when they were making it, they had to draw long straws across in order to keep it from falling asunder—a fine plan it is, too. Jack M'Kenna, the carpenter, carved it with a hand-saw, and if he didn't curse the same straws, I'm not here. 'Draw them out, Jack,' said Father Corrigan—'draw them out.—It's asy known, Jack, you never ate a polite dinner, you poor awkward spalpeen, or you'd have pulled out the straws the first thing you did, man alive.'

"Such lashins of corned beef, and rounds of beef, and legs of mutton, and bacon—turkeys and geese, and barn-door fowls, young and fat. They may talk as they will, but commend me to a piece of good ould bacon, ate with crock butther, and phaties, and cabbage. Sure enough, they leathered away at everything, but this and the pudding were the favourites. Father Corrigan gave up the carving in less than no time, for it would take him half a day to sarve them all, and he wanted to provide for number one. After helping himself, he set my uncle to it, and maybe he didn't slash away right and left. There was half-a-dozen gorsoons carrying about the beer in cans, with froth upon it like barm—but that was beer in airnest, Nancy—I'll say no more.

"When the dinner was over, you would think there was as much left as would sarve a regiment; and sure enough, a right hungry ragged regiment was there to take care of it—though, to tell the truth, there was as much taken into Finigan's as would be sure to give us all a rousing supper. Why, there was such a troop of beggars—men, women, and childher, sitting over on the sunny side of the ditch, as would make short work of the whole dinner, had they got it. Along with Father Corrigan and me, was my father and mother, and Mary's parents; my uncle, cousins, and nearest relations on both sides. Oh, it's Father Corrigan, God rest his sowl, he's *now* in glory, and so he was *then*, also—how he did crow and laugh! 'Well, Matthew Finigan,' says he, 'I can't say but I'm happy that your *Colleen Bawn** here has lit upon a husband that's no discredit to the family—and it is herself didn't drive her pigs to a bad market,' says he. 'Why, in troth, Father avourneen,' says my mother-in-law, 'they'd be hard to plase that couldn't be satisfied with them she got; not saying but she had her pick and choice of many a good offer, and might have got richer matches; but Shane Fadh

* Fair girl.

M'Cawell, although you're sitting there beside my daughter, I'm prouder to see you on my own flure, the husband of my child, nor if she'd got a man with four times your substance.'

" 'Never heed the girls for knowing where to choose,' says his Reverence, silyly enough: 'but, upon my word, only she gave us all the slip, to tell the truth, I had another husband than Shane in my eye for her, and that was my own nevvvy, Father James's brother here.'

" 'And I'd be proud of the connexion,' says my father-in-law, 'but you see, these girls won't look much to what you or I'll say, in choosing a husband for themselves. How-and-iver, not making little of your nevvvy, Father Michael, I say he's not to be compared with that same bouchal sitting beside Mary there.'

" 'No, nor by the powdhers-o'-war, never will,' says Billy Cormick the tailor, who had come over and slipped in on the other side betune Father Corrigan and the bride—'by the powdhers-o'-war, he'll never be fit to be compared with me, I tell you, till yesterday comes back again.'

" 'Why, Billy,' says the priest, 'you're every place.' 'But where I ought to be!' says Billy; 'and that's hard and fast tackled to Mary Bane, the bride here, instead of that steepole of a fellow, she has got,' says the little cock.

" 'Billy, I thought you were married,' said Father Corrigan.

" 'Not I, your Reverence,' says Billy; 'but I'll soon do something, Father Michael—I have been threatening this long time, but I'll do it at last.'

" 'He's not exactly married, Sir,' says my uncle, 'but there's a colleen present (looking at the bride's maid) that will soon have his name upon her.'

" 'Very good, Billy,' says the priest, 'I hope you will give us a rousing wedding—equal, at least, to Shane Fadh's.'

" 'Why then, your Reverence, except I get sich a darling as Molly Bane, here—and by this and by that, it's you that *is* the darling, Molly ashore—what come over me, at all at all, that I didn't think of you,' says the little man, drawing close to her, and poor Mary smiling good-naturedly at his spirit.

" 'Well, and what if you *did* get such a darling as Molly Bane, there?' says his Reverence.

" 'Why, except I get the likes of her for a wife—upon second thoughts, I don't like marriage, any way,' said Billy, winking against the priest—'I'll lade such a life as your Reverence; and, by the powdhers, it's a thousand pities that I wasn't made into a priest, instead of a tailor. For, you see, if I had,' says he, giving a verse of an old song—

'For, you see, if I had,
It's I'd be the lad,
That would show all my people such larning;
And when they'd go wrong,
Why, instead of a song,
I'd give them a lump of a sarmin.'

" 'Billy,' says my father-in-law, 'why don't you make a hearty dinner, man alive? go back to your sate and finish your male—you're aiting

nothing to signify.' 'Me!' says Billy—'why, I'd scorn to ate a hearty dinner; and, I'd have you to know, Matt Finigan, that it wasn't for the sake of your dinner I came here, but in regard to your family, and becase I wished him well that's sitting beside your daughter: and it ill becomes your father's son to cast up your dinner in my face, or any one of my family; but a blessed minute longer I'll not stay among you. Give me your hand, Shane Fadh, and you, Mary—may goodness grant you pace and happiness every night and day you both rise out of your beds. I made that coat your husband has on his back beside you—and a better fit was never made; but I didn't think it would come to my turn to have my dinner cast up this a-way, as if I was aiting it for charity.'

"'Hut, Billy,' says I, 'sure it was all out of kindness; he didn't mane to offend you.'

"'It's no matter,' says Billy, beginning to cry, 'he *did* offend me; and it's low days with me to bear an affront from him, or the likes of him; but by the powdhers-o'-war,' says he, getting into a great rage, 'I *won't* bear it,—only as you're an old man yourself, I'll not rise my hand to you; but, let any man now that has the heart to take up your quarrel, come out and stand before me on the sod here.'

"Well, by this time, you'd tie all that were present with three straws, to see Billy stripping himself, and his two wrists not thicker than drumsticks. While the tailor was raging, for he was pretty well up with what he had taken, another person made his appearance at the far end of the *boreen** that led to the green where we sat. He was mounted upon the top of a sack that was upon the top of a sober looking baste enough, God knows; he jogging along at his ase, his legs dangling down from the sack on each side, and the long skirts of his coat hanging down behind him. Billy was now getting pacified, becase they gave way to him a little; so the fun went round, and they sang, roared, danced, and courted, right and left.

"When the stranger came as far as the skirt of the green, he turned the horse over quite nathural to the wedding; and, sure enough, when he jogged up, it was Friar Rooney himself, with a sack of oats, for he had been *questin*†. Well, sure the ould people couldn't do less nor all go over to put the *faillah*‡ on him. 'Why, then,' says my father and mother-in-law, 'tis yourself, Friar Rooney, that's as welcome as the flowers of May; and see who's here before you—Father Corrigan, and Father Dollard.'

"'Thank you, thank you, Molshy—thank you, Matthew—troth, I know that 'tis I am welcome.'

"'Ay, and you're welcome again, Father Rooney,' said *my* father, going down and shaking hands with him, 'and I'm proud to see you here. Sit down, your Reverence—here's everything that's good, and plinty of it, and if you don't make much of yourself, never say an ill fellow dealt with you.'

* A small pathway, or bridle road leading to a farm-house.

† *Questin*—When an Irish priest or friar collects corn or money from the people in a gratuitous manner, the act is called "*questin*."

‡ *Welcome*.

"The friar stood while my father was speaking, with a pleasant, contented face upon him, only a little roguish and droll.

" 'Hah! Shane Fadh,' says he, smiling drily at me, 'you *did* them all, I see. You have her there, the flower of the parish, blooming beside you; but I knew as much six months ago, ever since I saw you bid her good night at the hawthorn. Who looked back so often, Mary, eh? Ay, laugh and blush—do—throth, 'twas I that caught you, but you didn't see me, though. Well, a colleen, and if you did, too, you needn't be ashamed of your bargain, any how. You see, the way I came to persave yez that evening was this—but I'll tell it, by and bye. In the mane time,' says he, sitting down and attacking a fine piece of corn-beef and greens, 'I'll take care of a certain acquaintance of mine,' says he. 'How are you, reverend gintlemen of the *Secularity*. You'll permit a poor friar to sit and ate his dinner, in your presence, I humbly hope.'

" 'Frank,' says Father Corrigan, 'lay your hand upon your conscience, or upon your stomach, which is the same thing, and tell us honestly, how many dinners you eat on your travels among *my* parishioners this day.'

" 'As I'm a sinner, Michael, this is the only thing to be called a *dinner* I eat this day;—Shane Fadh—Mary, both your healths, and God grant you all kinds of luck and happiness, both here and hereafter! All your healths in ginerall! gintlemen *seculars*!'

" 'Thank you, Frank,' said Father Corrigan; 'how did you speed to-day?'

" 'How can any man speed, that comes after you?' says the Friar; 'I'm after travelling the half of the parish for that poor bag of oats that you see standing against the ditch.'

" 'In other words, Frank,' says the Priest, 'you took *Alihadhawan* in your way, and in about half-a-dozen houses filled your sack, and then turned your horse's head towards the good cheer, by way of *accident* only.'

" 'And was it by way of accident, Mr. *Secular*, that I got you and that illoquent young gintleman, your curate, here before me? Do you feel that, man of the world? Father James, your health, though—you're a good young man as far as saying nothing goes; but it's better to sit still than rise up and fall, so I commend you for your *discretion*,' says he; 'but I'm afeard your master there won't make you much fitter for the kingdom of heaven, any how.'

" 'I believe, Father Corrigan,' says my uncle, who loved to see the priest and the friar at it, 'that you've met with your match—I think Father Rooney's able for you.'

" 'Oh, sure,' says Father Corrigan, 'he was joker to the college of the *Sorebones* * in Paris; he got as much education as enabled him to say mass in Latin, and to beg oats in English, for his jokes.'

" 'Troth, and,' says the friar, 'if you were to get your larning on the same terms, you'd be guilty of very little knowledge; why, Michael, I never knew you to attempt a joke but once, and I was near shedding tears, there was something so very sorrowful in it.'

" 'This brought the laugh against the priest—' Your health, Molshy,

* Sorbonne.

says he, winking at my mother-in-law, and then giving my uncle, who sat beside him a *nudge*; 'I believe, Brian, I'm giving it to him.' "'Tis yourself that is,' says my uncle; 'give him a wipe or two more.' 'Wait till he answers the last,' says the friar.

"'He's always joking,' says Father James, 'when he thinks he'll make any thing by it.'

"'Ay!' says the friar, 'then God help you both if you were left to your jokes for your feeding; for a poorer pair of gentlemen wouldn't be found in Christendom.'

"'And I believe,' says Father Corrigan, 'if you depended for your feeding upon your divinity instead of your jokes, you'd be as poor as a man in the last stage of a consumption.'

"This threw the laugh against the friar, who smiled himself; but he was a dry man that never laughed much.

"'Sure,' says the friar, who was seldom at a loss, 'I have yourself and your nephew for examples that it's possible to live and be well fed without divinity.'

"'At any rate,' says my uncle, putting in *his* tongue, 'I think you're both very well able to make divinity a joke betune you,' says he.

"'Well done, Brian,' says the friar, 'and so they are, for I believe it is the only subject they can joke upon! and I beg your pardon, Michael, for not excepting it before; on that subject I allow you to be humoursome.'

"'If that be the case, then,' says Father Corrigan, 'I must give up your company, Frank, in order to avoid the force of bad example; for you're so much in the habit of joking on every thing else, that you're not able to except even divinity itself.'

"'You may aisily give *me* up,' says the friar, 'but how will you be able to forget Father Corrigan? I'm afeard you'll find *his* acquaintance as great a detriment to yourself, as it is to others in that respect.'

"'What makes you say,' says Father James, who was more in airnest than the rest, 'that my uncle won't make me fit for the kingdom of heaven?'

"'I had a pair of rasons for it, Jemmy,' says the friar; 'one is, that he doesn't understand the subject himself; and another is, that you haven't capacity for it, even if he did. You've a want of natural parts—a *whackuum* here,' pointing to his forehead.

"'I beg your pardon, Frank,' says Father James, 'I deny your premisses, and I'll now argue in Latin with you, if you wish, upon any subject you please.'

"'Come, then,' says the friar,—'*Kid eat ivy mars eat hay.*'

"'Kid—what?' says the other.

"'Kid eat ivy mars eat hay,' answers the friar.

"'I don't know what you're at,' says Father James, 'but I'll argue in Latin with you as long as you wish.'

"'Tut man,' says Father Rooney, 'Latin's for school-boys; but come, now, I'll take you in another language—I'll try you in Greek—*In-mud-cel-is in-clay-none-is in-fir-tar-is in-oak-none-is.*'

"The curate looked at him, amazed, not knowing what answer to

make. At last says he, 'I don't profess to know Greek, bekase I never larned it—but stick to the Latin, and I'm not afeard of you.'

"'Well, then,' says the friar, 'I'll give you a trial at that—*Afflat to canis ter—Forte duz fel flat in guttur.*'

"'A flat-tay-cannister—Forty ducks fell flat in the gutthers!' says Father James,—'why that's English!'

"'English!' says the friar, 'oh, good bye to you, Mr. Secular; if that's your knowledge of Latin, you're an honour to your tachers and to your cloth.'

"Father Corrigan now laughed heartily at the puzzling the friar gave Father James. 'James,' says he, 'never heed him; he's only pesthering you with bog-latin: but, at any rate, to do him justice, he's not a bad scholar, I can tell you that. . . . Your health, Frank, you droll crathur—your health. I have only one fault to find with you, and that is, that you fast and mortify yourself too much. Your fasting has reduced you from being formerly a friar of very genteel dimensions to a cut of corpulency that smacks strongly of penance—fifteen stone at least.'

"'Why,' says the friar, looking down quite plased, entirely, at the cut of his own waist, which, among ourselves, was no trifle, and giving a growl of a laugh—the most he ever gave: 'if what you pray here benefits you in the *next life* as much as what *I fast* does me *in this*, it will be well for the world in general, Michael.'

"'How can you say, Frank,' says Father James, 'with such a carkage as that, that you're a *poor* friar? Upon my credit, when you die, I think the angels will have a job of it in wafting you upwards.'

"'Jemmy, man, was it you that said it?—why, my light's beginning to shine upon you, or you never could have got out so much,' says Father Rooney, putting his hands over his brows, and looking up toardst him; 'but if you ever read scripthur, which I suppose you're not overburdened with, you would know that it says, "blessed are the poor in spirit," but not blessed are the poor in flesh—now, mine is spiritual poverty.'

"'Very true, Frank,' says Father Corrigan, 'I believe there's a great dearth and poverty of spirituality about you, sure enough. But of all kinds of poverty, commend me to a friar's. Voluntary poverty's something, but it's the devil entirely for a man to be poor against his will. You friars boast of this voluntary poverty; but if there's a fat bit in any part of the parish, we, that are the lawful clargy, can't eat it, but you're sure to drop in, just in the nick of time, with your voluntary poverty.'

"'I'm sure, if we do,' says the friar, 'it's nothing out of your pocket, Michael. I declare, I believe you begrudge us the air we breathe. But don't you know very well that our ordhers are apostolic, and that, of coorse, we have a more primitive appearance than you have.'

"'No such thing,' says the other; 'you, and the parsons, and the fat bishops, are too far from the right place—the only difference between you is, that you are fat and lazy *by toleration*, whereas the others are fat and lazy *by authority*. You are fat and lazy on your ould horses, jogging about from house to house, and stuffing yourselves either at the table of other people's parishioners, or in your own convents in Dublin and elsewhere. *They* are rich, bloated gluttons, going about in their coaches,

and wallying in wealth. Now, *we* are the golden mean, Frank, that live upon a little, and work hard for it.'

" 'Why, you cormorant,' says the friar, a little nettled, for the dhrop was beginning to get up into his head, 'sure, if we're fat *by toleration*, we're only *tolerably* fat, my worthy secular !'

" 'You see,' says the friar, in a whisper to my uncle, 'how I sobered them in the larning, and they are good scholars for all that, but not near so deep read as myself.' 'Michael,' says he, 'now that I think on it—sure I'm to be at Denis O'Flaherty's *Month's mind* on Thursday next.'

" 'Indeed I would not doubt you,' says Father Corrigan ; 'you wouldn't be apt to miss it.'

" 'Why, the widdy Flaherty asked me yesterday, and I think that's proof enough that I'm not going unseent for.'

" By this time the company was hard and fast at the punch, the songs, and the dancing. The dinner had been cleared off, except what was before the friar, who held out wonderfully, and the beggars and shulers were clawing and scoulding one another about the divide. The dacentest of us went into the house for a while, taking the fiddler with us, and the rest, with the piper, staid on the green to dance, where they were soon joined by lots of the counthry people, so that in a short time there was a large number entirely. After sitting for some time within, Mary and I began, you may be sure, to get unasy, sitting palavering among a parcel of ould sober folks ; so, at last, out we slipped, and the few other dacent young people that were with us, to join the dance, and shake our toe along with the rest of them. When we made our appearance, the flure was instantly cleared for us, and then she and I danced the *Humours of Glis*.

" Well, it's no matter—it's all past now, and she lies low ; but I may say that it wasn't very often danced in better style since, I'd wager. Lord bless us, what a drame the world is ! The darling of my heart you war, avourneen machree. I think I see her with the modest smile upon her face, straight, and fair, and beautiful, and—hem—and when the dance was over, how she stood leaning upon me, and my heart within melting to her, and the look she'd give into my eyes and my heart, too, as much as to say, This is the happy day with me ; and the blush still would fly across her face, when I'd press her, unknownst to the bystanders, against my beating heart. *A suilish machree*,* she is now gone from me—lies low, and it all appears like a drame to me ; but—hem—God's will be done !—sure she's happy—och, och ! !

" Many a shake hands did I get from the neighbours' sons, wishing me joy ; and I'm sure I couldn't do less than thrate them to a glass, you know ; and 'twas the same way with Mary : many a neighbour's daughter, that she didn't do more nor know by eyesight, maybe, would come up and wish her happiness in the same manner, and she would say to me, 'Shane, avourneen, that's such a man's daughter—they're dacent friendly people, and we can't do less nor give her a glass.' I, of coorse, would go down and bring them over, after a little pulling—making, you

* Light of my heart.

see, as if they wouldn't come—to where my brother was handing out the native.

“ In this way we passed the time till the evening came on, except that Mary and the bridesmaid were sent for to dance with the priests, who were within at the punch, in all their glory,—Friar Rooney along with them, as jolly as a prince. I and my man, on seeing this, were for staying with the company; but my mother, who 'twas that came for them, says, ‘never mind the boys, Shane; come in with the girls, I say. You're just wanted at the present time, both of you; follow me for an hour or two, till their Reverences within have a bit of a dance with the girls, in the back room; we don't want to gother a crowd about them.’ Well, we went in, sure enough, for a while; but, I don't know how it was, I didn't at all feel comfortable with the priests; for, you see, I'd rather sport my day figure with the boys and girls upon the green: so I gives Jack *the hard word**, and in we went, when, behold you, there was Father Corrigan planted upon the side of a *settle*, Mary along with him, waiting till they'd have the fling of a dance together, whilst the Cyrate was capering on the flure before the bridesmaid, who was a purty dark-haired girl, to the tune of ‘Kiss my lady;’ and the friar planted between my mother and mother-in-law, one of his legs stretched out on a chair, he singing some funny song or other, that brought the tears to their eyes with laughing.

“ Whilst Father James was dancing with the bridesmaid, I gave Mary the wink to come away from Father Corrigan, wishing, as I tould you, to get out amongst the youngsters once more; and Mary, herself, to tell the truth, although he was the priest, was very willing to do so. I went over to her, and says, ‘Mary, asthore, there's a friend without that wishes to spake to you.’

“ ‘Well,’ says Father Corrigan, ‘tell that friend that she's better employed, and that they must wait, whoever they are. I'm giving your wife, Shane,’ says he, ‘a little good advice that she won't be the worse for, and she can't go now.’

“ Mary, in the mean time, had got up, and was coming away, when his Reverence wanted her to stay till they'd finish their dance. ‘Father Corrigan,’ says she, ‘let me go now, Sir, if you please, for they would think it bad threatment of me not to go out to them.’

“ ‘Troth, and you'll do no such thing, acushla,’ says he, spaking so sweet to her; ‘let them come in if they want you. Shane,’ says his Reverence, winking at me, and spaking in a whisper, ‘stay here, you and the girls, till we take a hate at the dancing—don't you know that the ould women here, and me, will have to talk over some things about the fortune; you'll maybe get more nor you expect. Here, Molshy,’ says he to my mother-in-law, ‘don't let the youngsters out of this.’

“ ‘Musha, Shane, a-hagur,’ says the ould woman, ‘why will yez go and lave the place; sure you needn't be dashed before them—they'll dance themselves.’

“ Accordingly we staid in the room; but just on the word, Mary gives

* A pass-word, sign, or brief intimation, touching something of which a man is ignorant, that he may act accordingly.

one spring away, laving his Reverence by himself on the *settle*. 'Come away,' says she, 'lave them there, and let us go to where I can have a dance with yourself, Shane.'

"Well, I always loved Mary, but at that minute, if it would save her, I think I could spill my heart's blood for her. 'Mary,' says I, full to the throath, 'Mary, *acushla agus asthore machree* *, I could lose my life for you.'

"She looked in my face, and the tears came into her eyes—'Shane, *achora*,' says she, 'amn't I *your happy girl*, at last?' She was leaning over against my breast; and what answer do you think I made?—I pressed her to my heart: I did more—I *took off my hat, and, looking up to God, I thanked him with tears in my eyes, for giving me such a treasure*. 'Well, come now,' says she, 'to the green;' so we went—and it's she that was the girl, when she did go among them, that threw them all into the dark for beauty and figure: as fair as a lily itself did she look—so tall and elegant, that you wouldn't think she was a farmer's daughter at all; so we left the priests dancing away, for we could do no good before them.

"When we had danced an hour or so, them that the family had the greatest regard for were brought in, unknownst to the rest, to drink tay. Mary planted herself beside me, and would sit nowhere else; but the friar got beside the bride's-maid, and I surely observed that many a time she'd look over, likely to split, at Mary, and it's Mary herself that gave her many's a wink, to come to the other side; but, you know, out of manners, she was obliged to sit quietly, though, among ourselves, it's she that was like a hen on a hot griddle, beside the ould chap. It was now that the bride's-cake was got. Ould Soney Mary marched over, and putting the bride on her feet, got up on a chair and broke it over her head, giving round a *fadge* † of it to every young person in the house, and they again to their acquaintances: but, lo and behold you, who should insist on getting a whang of it but the friar, which he rolled up in a piece of paper, and put it in his pocket. 'I'll have good fun,' says he, 'dividing this to-morrow among the *colleens* when I'm collecting my oats—the sorra one of me but'll make them give me the worth of it of something, if it was only a fat hen or a square of bacon.'

"After tay the ould folk got full of talk; the youngsters danced round them; the friar sung like a thrush, and told many a droll story. The tailor had got drunk a little too early, and had to be put to bed, but he was now as fresh as ever, and able to dance a hornpipe, which he did on a door. The Dorans and the Flanagans had got quite thick after drubbing one another—Ned Doran began his courtship with Alley Flanagan on that day, and they were married soon after, so that the two factions joined, and never had another battle until the day of her berrial, when they were at it as fresh as ever. Several of those that were at the wedding were lying drunk about the ditches, or roaring, and swaggering, and singing about the place. The night falling, those that were dancing on the green removed to the barn. Father Corrigan and Father James weren't ill off; but as for the friar, although he was as pleasant as a lark,

* The very pulse and delight of my heart.

† A liberal portion torn off a thick cake.

there was hardly any such thing as making him tipsy. Father Corrigan wanted him to dance—'What!' says he, 'would you have me to bring on an earthquake, Michael?—but who ever heard of a follower of Saint Domnick, bound by his vow to voluntary poverty and mortification— young couple, your health—will any body tell me who mixed this, for they've knowledge worth a folio of the fathers—poverty and mortifications, going to shake his heel? By the bones of St. Domnick, I'd deserve to be suspended if I did. Will no one tell me who mixed this, I say, for they had a jewel of a hand at it?—Och—

'Let parsons prache and pray—
Let priests too pray and prache, Sir;
What's the reason they
Don't practice what they tache, Sir?
Ferral, orrall, loll,
Ferral, orrall, laddy—

S'io da slaintah ma collenes agus ma bouchalee. Hoigh, oigh, oigh, healths all! gentlemen seculars! Molshy,' says the friar to my mother-in-law, 'send that *bocaun** to bed—poor fellow, he's almost off—rouse yourself, James! It's aisy to see that he's but young at it yet—that's right—he's sound asleep—just toss him into bed, and in an hour or so he'll be as fresh as a daisy.

'Let parsons prache and pray—
— Ferrall, orrall, loll.'

"'For dear's sake, Father Rooney,' says my uncle, running in, in a great hurry, 'keep yourself quiet a little; here's the Squire and master Francis coming over to fulfil their promise; he would have come up airtier, he says, but that he was away all day at the 'sises.'

"'Very well,' says the friar, 'let him come—who's afeard—mind yourself, Michael.'

"In a minute or two they came in, and we all rose up of course to welcome them. The Squire *shuck* hands with the ould people, and afterwards with Mary and myself, wishing us all happiness, then with the two clergymen, and introduced Master Frank to them; and the friar made the young chap sit beside him. The masher then took a sate himself, and looked on while they were dancing, with a smile of good humour on his face—while they, all the time, would give new touches and trebles, to show off all their steps before him. He was landlord both to my father and father-in-law; and it's he that was the good man, and the gentleman every inch of him. They may all talk as they will, but commend me, Mr. Morrow, to some of the ould Squires of former times for a landlord. The priests, with all their larning, werenothing to him for good breeding—he appeared so free, and so much at his ase, and even so respectful, that I don't think there was one in the house but would put their two hands under his feet to do him a sarvice.

"When he sat a while, my mother-in-law came over with a glass of nice punch that she had mixed, at laeste equal to what the friar praised so well, and making a low curtsy, begged pardon for using such freedom with his honour, but hoped that he would just taste a little to the happi-

* A soft, unsophisticated youth.

ness of the young couple. He then drank our healths, and shuck hands with us both a second time, saying—although I can't, at all at all, give it in anything like his own words—'I am glad,' says he, to Mary's parents, 'that your daughter has made such a good choice;'—throth, he did—the Lord be merciful to his sowl—God forgive me for what I was going to say, and he a Protestant;—but if ever one of yez went to heaven, Mr. Morrow, he did;—'such a prudent choice; and I congr—con—grathulate you,' says he to my father, 'on your connexion with so industrious and respectable a family. You are now beginning the world for yourselves,' says he to Mary and me, 'and I cannot propose a better example to you both, than that of your respective parents. From this forrid,' says he, 'I'm to considher you my tenants; and I wish to take this opportunity of informing you both, that should you act up to the opinion I entertain of you, by an attentive coorse of industry and good management, you will find in me an encouraging and indulgent landlord. I know, Shane,' says he to me, smiling a little, knowingly enough too, 'that you have been a little wild or so, but that's past, I trust. You have now sarious duties to perform, which you cannot neglect—but you will not neglect them; and be assured, I say again, that I shall feel pleasure in rendhering you every assistance in my power in the *cultivation* and improvement of your farm.'—'Go over, both of you,' says my father, 'and thank his honour, and promise to do everything he says.' Accordingly, we did so; I made my scrape as well as I could, and Mary blushed to the eyes, and dropp'd her curtsy.

"'Ah!' says the friar, 'see what it is to have a good landlord and a Christian gentleman to dale with. This is the feeling which should always bind a landlord and his tenants together. If I know your character, Squire Whitethorn, I believe you're not the man that would put a Protestant tenant over the head of a Catholic one, which shows, sir, your own good sense; for what is a difference of religion, when people do what they ought to do? Nothing but the name. I trust, sir, we shall meet in a better place than this—both Protestant and Catholic.'

"'I am happy, sir,' says the Squire, 'to hear such principles from a man who I thought was bound to hould different opinions.'

"'Ah, sir!' says the friar, 'you little know who you're talking to, if you think so. I happened to be collecting a taste of oats, with the permission of my friend, Doctor Corrigan, here, for I'm but a poor friar, sir, and dropped in *by mere accident*; but, you know the hospitality of our country, Squire; and that's enough—go they would not allow me, and I was mintoning to this young gentleman, your son, how we collected the oats, and he insisted on my calling—a generous, noble chuid! I hope, sir, you have got proper instructors for him?'

"'Yes,' said the Squire; 'I'm taking care of that point.'

"'What do you think, sir, but he insists on my calling over to-morrow, that he may give me *his* share of oats, as I told him that I was a friar, and that he was a little parishioner of mine; but I added, that that wasn't right of him, without his papa's consint.'

"'Well, sir,' says the Squire, 'as he has promised, I will support

him; so if you'll ride over to-morrow, you shall have a sack of oats—at all events I shall send you a sack in the course of the day.'

" 'I humbly thank you, sir,' says Father Rooney; 'and I thank my noble little parishioner for his generosity to the poor ould friar—God mark you to grace, my dear; and, wherever you go, take the ould man's blessing along with you.'

" They then bid us good night, and we all rose and saw them to the door.

" Father Corrigan now appeared to be getting sleepy. While this was going on, I looked about me, but couldn't see Mary. The tailor was just beginning to get a little hearty once more. Supper was talked of, but there was no one that could ate anything; even the friar was against it. The clergy now got their horses, the friar laving his oats behind him; for we promised to send them home, and something more along with them the next day. Father James was roused up, but could hardly stir with a *hoddick*. Father Corrigan was correct enough; but when the friar got up, he ran a little to the one side, upsetting Soney Mary, that sot a little beyond him. He then called over my mother-in-law to the dresser, and after some *collogin**, she slipped two fat fowl, that had never been touched, into one of his coat pockets, that was big enough to hould a leg of mutton. My father then called me over, and said, 'Shane,' says he, 'hadn't you better slip Father Rooney a bottle or two of that whiskey; there's plenty of it there that wasn't touched, and you won't be a bit the poorer of it, may be, this day twelve months.' I accordingly dhropped two bottles of it into the other pocket, so that his Reverence was well balanced any how.

" 'Now,' says he, 'before I go, kneel down both of you, till I give you my benediction.'

" We accordingly knelt down, and he gave us his blessing in Latin before he bid us good night!

" After they went, Mary threw the stocking—all the unmarried folks coming in the dark, to see who it would hit. Bless my sowl, but she was the droll Mary—for what did she do, only put a big brogue of her father's into it, that was near two pounds weight; and who should it hit on the bare sponce, but Billy Cormick, the tailor—who thought he was fairly shot, for it levelled the crathur at once; though that wasn't hard to do any how.

" This was the last ceremony: and Billy was well continted to get the knock, for you all know, whoever the stocking strikes upon, is to be marrid first. After this, my mother and mother-in-law set them to the dancing—and 'twas themselves that kept it up till long after daylight the next morning—but first they called me into the next room where Mary was: and—and—so ends my wedding; by the same token that I'm as dry as a stick."

" Come, Nancy," says Andy Morrow, "replenish again for us all, with a double measure for Shane Fadh—because he well desarves it."

" Why, Shane," observed Alick, "you must have a terrible fine memory of your own, or you couldn't tell it all so exact."

* Whispering.

"There's not a man in the four provinces has sich a memory," replied Shane. "I never hard that story yet, but I could repate it in fifty years afterwards. I could walk up any town in the kingdom, and let me look at the signs, and I would give them to you agin jist exactly as they stood."

Thus ended the account of Shane Fadh's wedding ; and, after finishing the porter, they all returned home, with an understanding that they were to meet the next night in the same place.





LARRY M'FARLAND'S WAKE.

THE succeeding evening found them all assembled about Ned's fireside in the usual manner; where M'Roarkin, after a wheezy fit of coughing and a draught of Nancy's porter, commenced to give them an account of **LARRY M'FARLAND'S WAKE.**

We have observed before, that M'Roarkin was desperately asthmatic, a circumstance which he felt to be rather an unpleasant impediment to the indulgence either of his mirth

or sorrow. Every chuckle at his own jokes ended in a disastrous fit of coughing; and when he became pathetic, his sorrow was most ungraciously dissipated by the same cause; two facts which were highly relished by his audience.

"**LARRY M'FARLAND**, when a young man, was considered the best labourer within a great ways of him; and no servant-man in the parish

got within five shillings a quarter of his wages. Often and often, when his time would be near out, he'd have offers from the rich farmers and gentlemen about him, of higher terms; so that he was seldom with one mather more nor a year at the very most. He could handle a flail with'er a man that ever stepped in black leather; and at spade-work there wasn't his aquil. Indeed, he had a brain for everyt'ing: he could thatch better nor many that airned their bread by it; could make a slide-car, straddle, or any other rough carpenter-work, that it would surprise you to think of it; could work a kish or side creel beautifully; mow as much as any two men, and go down a ridge of corn almost as fast as you could walk; was a great hand at ditching, or draining meadows and bogs; but above all things he was famous for building hay-ricks and corn-stacks; and when Squire Farmer used to enter for the prize at the yearly ploughing match, he was sure to borrow the loan of Larry from whatever master he happened to be working with. And well he might, for the year out of four that he hadn't Larry, he lost the prize: and every one knew that if Larry had been at the tail of his plough, they would have had a tighter job of it in beating him.

"Larry was a light, airy young man, that knew his own value; and was proud enough, God knows, of what he could do. He was, indeed, too much *up* to sport and divarsion, and never knew his own mind for a week. It was against him that he never stayed long in one place; for when he got a house of his own afterwards, he had no one that cared anything in particular about him. Whenever any man would hire him, he'd take care to have Easter and Whiss'n Mondays to himself, and one or two of the Christmas *Maragah-mores**. He was also a great dancer, fond of the dhrop—and used to dress above his station: going about with a shop-cloth coat, cassimoor small-clothes, and a caroline hat; so that you would little think he was a poor sarvint-man, labouring for his wages. One way or other, the money never sted long with him; but he had light spirits, depended entirely on his good hands, and cared very little about the world, provided he could take his own fling out of it.

"In this way he went on from year to year, changing from one master to another; every man that would employ him thinking he might get him to stop with him for a constancy. But it was all useless; he'd be off after half a year, or sometimes a year at the most, for he was fond of roving; and that man would never give himself any trouble about him afterwards; though, maybe, if he had continted himself with him, and been sober and careful, he would be willing to assist and befriend him, when he might stand in need of assistance.

"It's an ould proverb, that 'birds of a feather flock together,' and Larry was a good proof of this. There was in the same neighbourhood a young woman named Sally Lowry, who was just the other end of himself †, for a pair of good hands, a love of dress and of dances. She was

* Anglice—Big markets. There are three of these held before Christmas, and one or two before Easter, to enable the country folks to make their markets, and prepare for the more comfortably celebrating those great convivial festivals. They are almost as numerous attended as fairs; for which reason they are termed "big markets."

† Meaning his counterpart, as it were.

well-looking, too, and knew it; light and showy, but a tight and clans sarvint, any way. Larry and she, in short, began to court, and were pulling a coard together for as good as five or six years. Sally, like Larry, always made a bargain, when hiring, to have the holly-days to herself; and on these occasions she and Larry would meet and sport their figure; going off with themselves, as soon as mass would be over, into Ballymavourneen, where he would collect a pack of fellows about him, and she a set of her own friends; and there they'd sit down and drink for the length of a day, laving themselves without a penny of whatever little airing the dress left behind it; for Larry was never right, except when he was giving a thrate to some one or other.

"After corrousing away till evening, they'd then set off to a dance; and when they'd stay there till it would be late, he should see her home, of coorse, never parting till they'd settle upon meeting another day.

"At last they got fairly tired of this, and resolved to take one another for better for worse.—Indeed they would have done this long ago, only that they could never get as much together as would pay the priest. Howandever, Larry spoke to his brother, who was a sober, industrious boy, that had laid by his *scollops* for the windy day*, and tould him that Sally Lowry and himself were going to yoke for life. Tom was a well-hearted, friendly lad, and thinking that Sally, who bore a good name for being such a clane sarvint, would make a good wife, he lent Larry two guineas, which, along with two more that Sally's aunt, who had no childre of her own, gave her, enabled them to *over* their difficulties and get married. Shortly after this, his brother Tom followed his example; but as he had saved something, he made up to Val Slevin's daughter, that had a fortune of twenty guineas, a cow and a heifer, with two good chaff beds and bedding.

"Soon after Tom's marriage, he comes to Larry one day, and says, 'Larry, you and I are now going to face the world; we're both young, healthy, and willin' to work—so are our wives; and it's bad if we can't make out bread for ourselves, I think.'

"'Thrue for you, Tom,' says Larry, 'and what's to hinder us? I only wish we had a farm, and you'd see we'd take good bread out of it: for my part there's not another *he* in the country I'd turn my back upon for managing a farm, if I had one.'

"'Well,' says the other, 'that's what I wanted to overhaul as we're together; Squire Dickson's steward was telling me yesterday, as I was coming up from my father-in-law's, that his master has a farm of fourteen acres to set at the present time; the one the Nultys held, that went last spring to America—'twould be a dacent little *taks* between us.'

"'I know every inch of it,' says Larry, 'and good strong land it is, but it was never well wrought; the Nultys weren't fit for it at all; for one of them didn't know how to folla a plough.—I'd engage to make that land turn out as good crops as e'er a farm within ten miles of it.'

* In Irish the proverb is—" *Ha nahn la na guisla la na scuilipagh:*" that is, the windy or stormy day is not that on which the scollops should be cut. Scollops are osier twigs, sharpened at both ends, and inserted in the thatch, to bind it at the evo and rigging. The proverb inculcates preparation for future necessity.

" ' I know that, Larry,' says Tom, ' and Squire Dickson knows that no man could handle it to more advantage. Now if you join me in it, whatever means I have will be as much yours as mine ; there's two snug houses under the one roof, with out-houses and all, in good repair—and if Sally and Biddy will pull manfully along with us, I don't see, with the help of Almighty God, why we shouldn't get on dacently, and soon be well and comfortable to live.'

" ' Comfortable !' says Larry, ' no, but wealthy itself, Tom : and let us *at* * it at wanst ; Squire Dickson knows what I can do as well as any man in Europe ; and I'll engage won't be hard upon us for the first year or two ; our best plan is to go to-morrow, for fraid some other might get the foreway of us.'

" The Squire knew very well that two better boys weren't to be met with than the same M'Farlands, in the way of knowing how to manage land ; and although he had his doubts as to Larry's light and careless ways, yet he had good depindance out of the brother, and thought, on the whole, that they might do very well together.—Accordingly, he set them the farm at a reasonable rint, and in a short time they were both living on it with their two wives. They divided the fourteen acres into aquil parts ; and for fraid there would be any grumbling between them about better or worse, Tom proposed that they should draw lots, which was agreed to by Larry ; but, indeed, there was very little difference in the two halves ; for Tom took care, by the way he divided them, that none of them should have any reason to complain. From the time they went to live upon their farms, Tom was up early and down late, improving it—paid attention to nothing else ; axed every man's opinion as to what crop would be best for such a spot, and to tell the truth he found very few, if any, able to instruct him so well as his own brother Larry. He was no such labourer, however, as Larry—but what he was short in, he made up by perseverance and care.

" In the coorse of two or three years you would hardly bleeve how he got on, and his wife was every bit aquil to him. She spun the yarn for the linen that made their own shirts and sheeting, bought an odd pound of wool now and then when she could get it chape, and put it past till she had a stone or so ; she would then sit down and spin it—get it wove and dressed ; and before one would know anything about it she'd have the making of a dacent comfortable coat for Tom, and a bit of heather-coloured drugget for her own gown, along with a piece of striped red and blue for a petticoat—all at very little cost.

" It wasn't so with Larry. In the beginning, to be sure, while the fit was on him, he did very well ; only that he would go of an odd time to a dance ; or of a market or fair day, when he'd see the people pass by, dressed in their best clothes, he'd take the notion, and set off with himself, telling Sally that he'd just go in for a couple of hours, to see how the markets were going on.

" It's always an unpleasant thing for a body to go to a fair or market without anything in their pocket ; accordingly, if money was in the house, he'd take some of it with him, for fraid that any friend or acquaint-

* For an illustration of this phrase we must refer to THE DUKE—" Up, Guards, and *at* them."

ance might thrate him ; and then it would be a poor, mane-spirited thing, he would say, to take another man's thrate, without giving one for it: He'd seldom have any notion, though, of breaking in upon or spinding the money, he only brought it to keep his pocket, jist to prevent him from being shamed, should he meet a friend.

" In the maunetime, Sally, in his absence, would find herself lonely, and as she hadn't, maybe, seen her aunt for some time before, she'd lock the door, and go over to spind a while with her ; or take a trip as far as her ould mistress's place, to see the family. Many a thing people will have to say to one another about the pleasant times they had together, or several other subjects best known to themselves, of coorse. Larry would come home in her absence, and, finding the dgor looked, would slip down to Squire Dickson's, to chat with the steward or gardener, or with the sarvants in the kitchen.

" You all remimber Tom Hance, that kept the public-house at Tullyvernon cross-roads, a little above the Squire's—at laste, most of you do—and ould Wilty Rutledge, the fiddler, that spint his time between Tom's and the big house—God be good to Wilty!—it's himself was the droll man entirely: he died of aiting boiled baneas, for a wager that the Squire laid on him agin ould Captain Flint, and dhrinking porter after them till he was swelled like a tun ; but the Squire berrid him at his own expense. Well, Larry's haunt, on finding Sally out when he came home, was either at the Squire's kitchen, or Tom Hance's ; and as he was the *broth of a boy* at dancing, the sarvints, when he'd go down, would send for Wilty to Hance's, if he didn't happen to be with themselves at the time, and strike up a dance in the kitchen ; and, along with all, may be Larry would have a sup in his head.

" When Sally would come home, in her turn, she'd not find Larry before her ; but Larry's custom was to go in to Tom's wife, and say,—' Biddy, tell Sally, when she comes home, that I'm gone down awhile to the big house (or to Tom Hance's, as it might be), but I'll not be long.' Sally, after waiting awhile, would put on her cloak, and slip down to see what was keeping him. Of coorse, when finding the sport going on, and carrying a light heel at the dance herself, she'd throw off the cloak, and take a hand at it along with the rest. Larry and she would then go their ways home, find the fire out, light a sod of turf in Tom's, and feeling their own place very could and naked, after the blazing comfortable fire they had left behind them, go to bed, both in very middling spirits entirely.

" Larry, at other times, would quit his work early in the evening, to go down towards the Squire's, bekaase he had only to begin work *earlier* the next day to make it up. He'd meet the Squire himself, may be, and, after putting his hand to his hat, and getting a ' how do you do, Larry,' from his honour, enter into discourse with him about his honour's plan of stacking his corn. Now, Larry was famous at this.

" ' Who's to build your stacks this sason, your honour ?'

" ' Tim Dillon, Larry.'

" ' Is it he, your honour ?—he knows as much about building a stack of corn as Masther George, here. He'll only botch them, sir, if you let him go about them.'

“ ‘Yes; but what can I do, Larry? He’s the only man I have that I could trust them to.’

“ ‘Then it’s your honour needn’t say that, anyhow; for rather than see them spoiled, I’d come down myself and put them up for you.’

“ ‘Oh, I couldn’t expect that, Larry.’

“ ‘Why, then, I’ll do it, your honour; and you may expect me down in the morning at six o’clock, please God.’

“ Larry would keep his word, though his own corn was drop-ripe; and havin’ once undertaken the job, he couldn’t give it up till he’d finish it off dacently. In the meantime, his own crop would go to destruction; sometimes a windy day would come, and not leave him every tenth grain; he’d then get some one to cut it down for him—he had to go to the big house, to build the master’s corn; he was then all bustle—a great man entirely—there was *now* such; would be up with the first light, ordering and commanding, and directing the Squire’s labourers, as if he was the king of the castle. Maybe, ’tis after he’d come from the big house, that he’d collect a few of the neighbours, and get a couple of cars and horses from the Squire, you see, to bring home his own oats to the hayyard with moonlight, after the dews would begin to fall; and in a week afterwards every stack would be heated, and all in a reek of froth and smoke. It’s not aisy to do anything in a hurry, and especially it’s not aisy to build a corn-stack after night, when a man cannot see how it goes on: so ’twas no wonder if Larry’s stacks were supporting one another the next day—one laning north and another south.

“ But, along with this, Larry and Sally were great people for going to the dances that Hance used to have at the crase-roads, becase he wished to put money into his own pocket; and if a neighbour died, they were sure to be the first at the wake-house—for Sally was a great hand at washing down a corpse—and they would be the last home from the ber-ril; for, you know, they couldn’t but be axed in to the dhrinking, after the friends would lave the churchyard, to take a sup to raise their spirits and drown sorrow, for grief is always dronthy.

“ When the races, too, would come, they would be sure not to miss them; and if you’d go into a tint, it’s odds but you’d find them among a knot of acquaintances, dhrinking and dancing, as if the world was no trouble to them. They were, indeed, the best nathured couple in Europe; they would lend you a spade or a hook in potato time or harvest, out of pure kindness, though their own corn, that was drop-ripe, should be uncut, or their potatoes, that were a tramping every day with their own cows or those of the neighbours, should be undug—all for fraid of being thought un-neighbourly.

‘In this way they went on for some years, not altogether so bad but that they were able just to keep the house over their heads. They had a small family of three children on their hands, and every likelihood of having enough of them. Whenever they got a young one christened, they’d be sure to have a whole lot of the neighbours at it; and surely some of the young ladies, or Master George, or John, or Frederick, from the big house, should stand gossip, and have the child called after them. They then should have tay enough to sarve them, and loaf-bread and punch; and though Larry should sell a sack of seed-oats or seed-potatoes

to get it, no doubt but there should be a bottle of wine, to thrate the young ladies or gentlemen.

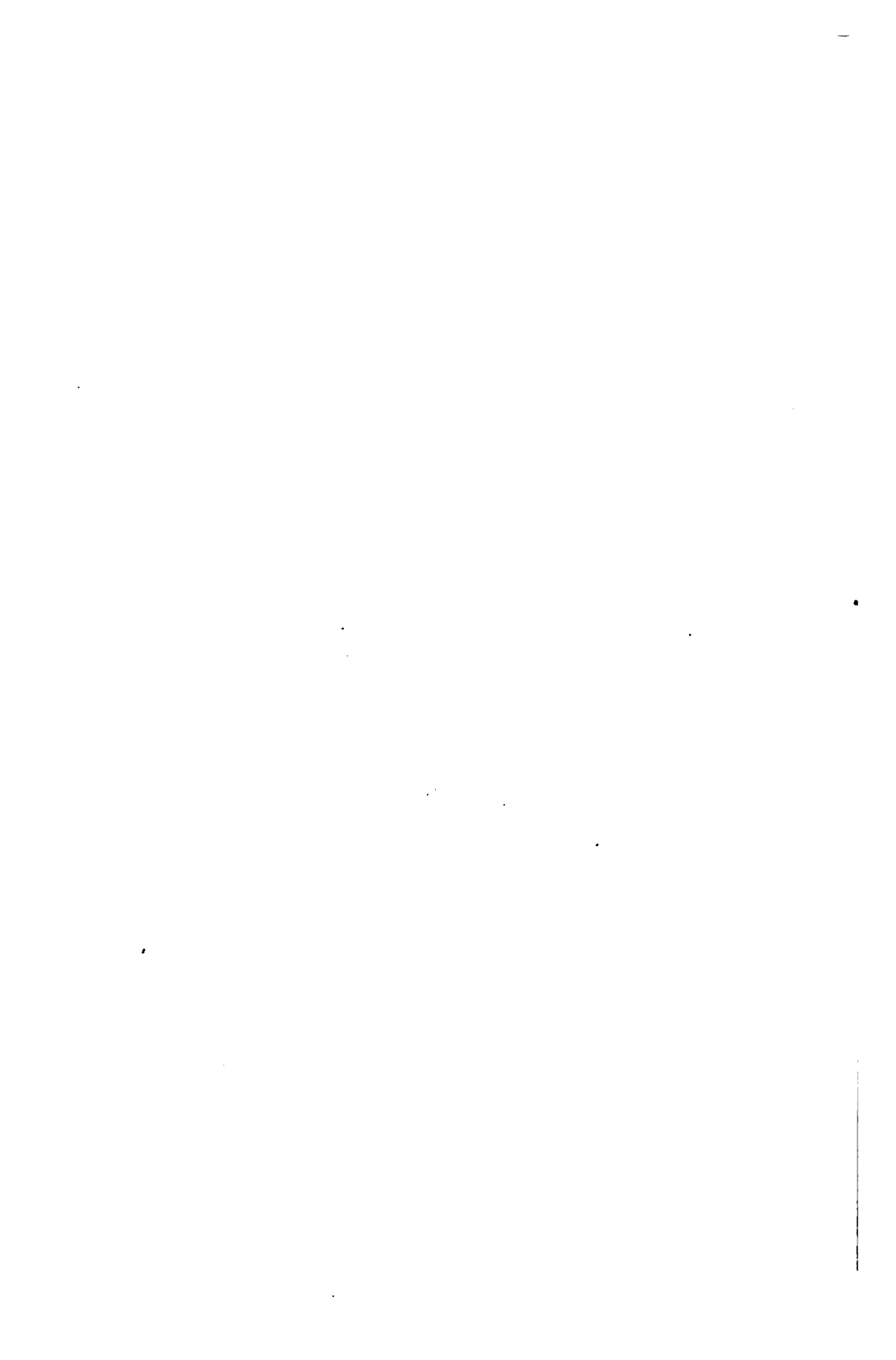
"When their childre grew up, little care was taken of them, bekase their parents minded other people's business more nor their own. They were always in the greatest poverty and distress; for Larry would be killing time about the Squire's, or doing some handy job for a neighbour who could get no other man to do it. They now fell behind entirely in the rint, and Larry got many hints from the Squire that if he didn't pay more attention to his business, he must look after his arrears, or as much of it as he could make up from the cattle and the crop. Larry promised well, as far as words went, and no doubt hoped to be able to perform; but he hadn't steadiness to go through with a thing. Thruth's best;—you see both himself and his wife neglected their business in the beginning, so that everything went at sixes and sevens. They then found themselves uncomfortable at their own hearth, and had no heart to labour: so that what would make a careful person work their fingers to the stumps to get out of poverty, only prevented *them* from working at all, or *draw* them to work for those that had more comfort, and could give them a better male's mate than they had themselves.

"Their tempers, now, soon began to get sour: Larry thought, bekase Sally wasn't as careful as she ought to be, that if he had taken any other young woman to his wife, he wouldn't be as he was;—*she* thought the very same thing of Larry. 'If he was like another,' she would say to his brother, 'that would be up airly and late at his own business, I would have spirits to work, by rason it would cheer my heart to see our little farm looking as warm and comfortable as another's; but, *fareer gairh**, that's not the case, nor likely to be so, for he spinds his time from one place to another, working for them that laughs at him for his pains; but he'd rather go to his neck in wather than lay down a hand for himself, except when he can't help it.'

"Larry, again, had *his* complaint—'Sally's a lazy trollop,' he would say to his brother's wife, 'that never does one hand's turn that she can help, but sits over the fire from morning till night, making bird's nests in the ashes with her yallow heels, or going about from one neighbour's house to another, gosthering and palavering about what doesn't consarn her, instead of minding the house. How can I have heart to work, when I come in—expecting to find my dinner ready; but, instead of that, get her sitting upon her hunkers on the hearth-stone, blowing at two or three green sticks with her apron, the pot hanging on the crook, without even the *white horses on it*†. She never puts a stitch in my clothes, nor in the childher's clothes, nor in her own, but lets them go to rags at once—the devil's luck to her! I wish I had never met with her, or that I had married a sober girl, that wasn't fond of dress and dancing. If she was a good sarvint, it was only because she liked to have a good name; ; for when she got a house and place of her own, see how she turned out!'

* Bitter misfortune.

† The *white horses* are produced by the extrication of air, which rises in white bubbles to the surface when the potatoes are beginning to boil; so that when the first symptoms of boiling commence, it is a usual phrase to say, the *white horses are on the pot*—sometimes the *white friars*.





The Pigs would brake into the hips of pretty skins Sally would throw down for them.

THE PIGS

1842

"From less to more, they went on squabbling and fighting, until at last you might see Sally one time with a black eye or a cut head, or another time going off with herself, crying, up to Tom Hance's or some other neighbour's house, to sit down and give a history of the *ruction* that he and she had on the head of some thrifle or another that wasn't worth naming. Their childher were shows, running about without a single stitch upon them, except ould coats that some of the sarvints from the big house would throw them. In these they'd go sailing about, with the long skirts trailing on the ground behind them; and sometimes Larry would be mane enough to take the coat from the *gorsoon*, and ware it himself. As for giving them any schooling, 'twas what they never thought of; but even if they were inclined to it, there was no school in the neighbourhood to send them to, for God knows it's the counthry that was in a neglected state as to schools in those days, as well as now.

It's a thru saying, that as the ould cock crows, the young one larns; and this was thru here, for the childher fought one another like so many divils, and swore like Trojans—Larry, along with everything else, when he was a Brine-oge, thought it was a manly thing to be a great swearer; and the childher when they got able to swear, warn't worse nor their father. At first, when any of the little souls would thry at an oath, Larry would break his heart laughing at them; and so from one thing to another, they got quite hardened in it, without being any way ochecked in wickedness. Things at last drew on to a bad state, entirely. Larry and Sally were now as ragged as Dives and Lazarus, and their childher the same. It was no strange sight, in summer, to see the young ones marching about the street as bare as my hand, with scarce a blessed stitch upon them that ever was seen, they dirt and ashes to the eyes, waddling after their uncle Tom's geese and ducks, through the green sink of rotten water that lay before their own door, just beside the dunghill: or the bigger ones running after the Squire's labourers, when bringing home the corn or the hay, wanting to get a ride as they went back with the empty cars.

"Larry and Sally would never be let into the squire's kitchen now to eat or drink, or spend an evening with the sarvints; he might go out and in to his meal's mate along with the rest of the labourers, but there was no *grak** for him. Sally would go down with her jug to get some buttermilk, and have to stand among a set of beggars and cotters, she as ragged and as poor as any of them, for she wouldn't be let into the kitchen till her turn came, no more nor another, for the sarvints would turn up their nooses with the greatest disdain possible at them both.

"It was hard to tell whether the inside or the outside of their house was worse;—within, it would almost turn your stomach to look at it—the flure was all dirt, for how could it be any other way, when at the end of every meal, the *schrahagt*† would be emptied down on it, and the pig that was whining and grunting about the door, would brake into the hape of praty-skins that Sally would there throw down for it. You might

* Goodwill.

† A flat wicker basket, off which the potatoes are eaten.

reel Larry's shirt, or make a surveyor's chain of it; for, *bad cess** to me, but I bleeve it would reach from this to the Rath. The blanket was in tatters, and like the shirt, would go round the house: their straw-beds were stocked with the *black militia*—the childer's heads were garrisoned with *Scotch greys*, and their heels and heads ornamented with all description of kibes. There wor only two stools in all the house, and a hassock of straw for the young child, and one of the stools wanted a leg, so that it was dangerous for a stranger to sit down upon it, except he knew of this failing. The flure was worn into large holes, that were mostly filled with slop, where the childher used to dabble about, and amuse themselves by sailing egg-shells upon them, with bits of boiled praties in them, by way of a little faste. The dresser was as black as dirt could make it, and had on it only two or three wooden dishes, clasped with tin, and noggins without hoops, a beetle, and some crockery. There was an ould chest to hold their male, but it wanted the hinges; and the childher, when they'd get the mother out, would mix a sup of male and wather in a noggin, and stuff themselves with it, raw and all, for they were almost starved.

"Then, as the cow-house had never been kept in repair, the roof fell in, and the cow and pig had to stand in one end of the dwelling-house; and, except Larry did it, whatever dirt the same cow and pig, and the childher to the back of that, were the occasion of, might stand there till Saturday night, when, for dacency's sake, Sally herself would take a shovel, and out with it upon the hape that was beside the sink before the door. If a wet day came, there wasn't a spot you could stand in for *down-rain*; and wet or dry, Sally, Larry, and the childher were spotted like trouts with the soot-dhrops, made by the damp of the roof and the smoke. The house on the outside was all in ridges of black dirt, where the thatch had rotted, or covered over with chickenweed or blind-oats; but in the middle of all this misery, they had a horse-shoe nailed over the door-head for good luck.

"You know, that in telling this story, I needn't minton every thing just as it happened, laying down year after year, or day and date; so you may suppose, as I go on, that all this went forward in the coorse of time. They didn't get bad of a sudden, but by degrees, neglecting one thing after another, until they found themselves in the state I'm relating to you—then struggling and struggling, but never taking the right way to mend.

"But where's the use in saying much more about it?—things couldn't stand—they were terribly in arrears; but the landlord was a good kind of man, and, for the sake of the poor childher, didn't wish to turn them on the wide world, without house or shelter, bit or sup. Larry, too, had been, and still was, so ready to do difficult and nice jobs for him, and would resave no payment, that he couldn't think of taking his only cow from him, or prevent him from raising a bit of oats or a plat of potatoes, every year, out of the farin.—The farm itself was all run to waste by this time, and had a miserable look about it—sometimes you might see a piece of a field that had been ploughed, all overgrown with grass because it had

* Bad cess.

never been sowed or set with anything. The slaps were all broken down, or had only a piece of an ould beam, a thorn bush, or crazy car lying across, to keep the cattle out of them. His bit of corn was all eat away and cropped here and there by the cows, and his potatoes rooted up by the pigs.—The garden, indeed, had a few cabbages, and a ridge of early potatoes, but these were so choked with burdocks and nettles, that you could hardly see them.

“ I told you before that they led the devil's life, and that was nothing but God's truth ; and according as they got into greater poverty, it was worse. A day couldn't pass without a fight ; if they'd be at their breakfast, maybe he'd make a potato hop off her skull, and she'd give him the contents of her noggin of buttermilk about the eyes ; then he'd *flaks* her, and the childher would be in an uproar, crying out, ‘ Oh, daddy, daddy, don't kill my mammy ! ’ When this would be over, he'd go off with himself to do something for the Squire, and would sing and laugh so pleasant, that you'd think he was the best-tempered man alive ; and so he was, until neglecting his business, and minding dances, and fairs, and drink, destroyed him.

“ It's the maxim of the world, that when a man is down, down with him ; but when a man goes down through his own fault, he finds very little mercy from any one. Larry might go to fifty fairs before he'd meet any one now to thrate him : instead of that, when he'd make up to them, they'd turn away, or give him the *could shoulder**. But that wouldn't satisfy him : for if he went to buy a slip of a pig, or a pair of brogues, and met an ould acquaintance that had got well to do in the world, he should bring him in, and give him a dram, merely to let the other see that he was still *able* to do it ; then, when they'd sit down, one dram would bring on another from Larry, till the price of the pig or the brogues would be spint, and he'd go home again as he came, sure to have another battle with Sally.

“ In this way things went on, when one day that Larry was preparing to sell some oats, a son of Nicholas Roe Sheridan's of the Broad-bog came in to him. ‘ Good morrow, Larry,’ says he : ‘ Good morrow, kindly, Art,’ says Larry—‘ how are you, ma bouchal ? ’

“ ‘ Why, I've no rason to complain, thank God and you,’ says the other ; ‘ how is yourself ? ’

“ ‘ Well, thank you, Art : how is the family ? ’

“ ‘ Faix, all stout, except my father, that has got a touch of the tooth-ach. When did you hear from the Slevins ? ’

“ ‘ Sally was down on Thursday last, and they're all well, your sowl.’

“ ‘ Where's Sally now ? ’

“ ‘ She's just gone down to the big house for a pitcher of buttermilk ; our cow won't calve these three weeks to come, and she gets a sup of *kitchen* for the childher till then : won't you take a sate, Art ? but you had better have a care of yourself, for that stool wants a leg.’

“ ‘ I didn't care she was within, for I brought a sup of my own stuff in my pocket,’ said Art.

“ ‘ Here, Hurrish (he was called Horatio afther one of the Square's

* Cool reception.

sons), fly down to the Square's, and see what's keeping your mother; the divil's no match for her at staying out with herself, wanst she's from under the roof.'

" 'Let Dick go,' says the little fellow, 'he's betther able to go nor I am; he has got a coat on him.'

" 'Go yourself, when I bid you,' says the father.

" 'Let *him* go,' says Hurrish, 'you have no right to bid me to go, when he has a coat upon him: you promised to ax one for me from Mather Francis, and you didn't do it; so the divil a toe I'll budge to-day,' says he, getting betune the father and the door.

" 'Well, wait,' says Larry, 'faix, only the strange man's to the fore, and I don't like to raise a hubbub, I'd *pay* you for making me such an answer. Dick, agra, will *you* run down, like a good bouchal, to the big house, and tell your mother to come home, that there's a strange man here wants her.'

" ' 'Twas Hurrish you bid,' says Dick—'and make *him*: that's the way he always thrates you,—does nothing that you bid him.'

" 'But you know, Dick,' says the father, 'that he hasn't a stitch to his back, and the crathur doesn't like to go out in the could, and he so naked.'

" 'Well, you bid him go,' says Dick, 'and let him; the sorra yard I'll go—the shin-burnt spalpeen, that's always the way with him; whatever he's bid to do, he throws it on me, bekase, indeed, he has no coat; but he'll folly Mather Thomas or Mather Francis through sleet and snow up the mountains, when they're fowling or tracing; he doesn't care about a coat *then*.'

" 'Hurrish, *you* must go down for your mother when I bid you'—says the weak man, turning again to the other boy.

" 'I'll not,' says the little fellow; 'send Dick.'

" Larry said no more, but, laying down the child he had in his hand, upon the flure, makes at him; the lad, however, had the door of him, and was off beyant his reach like a shot. He then turned into the house, and meeting Dick, felled him with a blow of his fist at the dresser. 'Tundher-an-ages, Larry,' says Art, 'what has come over you at all at all? to knock down the gorsoon with such a blow! couldn't you take a rod or a switch to him?—*Dher manhim* *, man, but I bleeve you've killed him outright,' says he, lifting the boy, and striving to bring him to life. Just at this minnit Sally came in.

" 'Arrah, *sweet bad-luck to you*, you lazy vagabond you,' says Larry, 'what kept you away till this hour?'

" 'The devil send you news, you nager you,' says Sally, 'what kept me—could I make the people churn sooner than they wished or were ready?'

" 'Ho, by my song, I'll flake you as soon as the dacent young man leaves the house,' says Larry to her, aside.

" 'You'll flake me, is it?' says Sally speaking out loud—'in throth, that's no new thing for you to do, any how.'

* *Dher manhim*—By my soul.

“ ‘Spake asy, you had better.’

“ ‘No, in troth, won't I spake asy; I've spoken asy too long, Larry, but the devil a taste of me will bear what I've suffered from you any longer, you mane-spirited blackguard you; for he is nothing else that would *rise* his hand to a woman, especially to one in my condition,’ and she put her gown tail to her eyes. When she came in, Art turned his back to her, for fraid she'd see the state the gorsoon was in—but now she noticed it—‘Oh murdher, murdher,’ says she clapping her hands, and running over to him, ‘what has happened my child? oh! murdher, murdher, this is *your* work, murdherer!’ says she to Larry. ‘Oh, you villain, are you bent on murdhering all of us—are you bent on destroying us out o' the face! Oh, wurrah sthrew! wurrah sthrew! what'll become of us! Dick, agra,’ says she, crying, ‘Dick, acnashla ma chree, don't you hear me spaking to you!—don't you hear your poor broken-hearted mother spaking to you? Oh! wurrah! wurrah! amn't I the heart-brokenest crathur that's alive this day, to see the likes of such doings! but I knew it would come to this! My sowl to glory, but my child's murdhered by that man standing there!—by his own father—his own father! Which of us will you murdher next, you villain!’

“ ‘For heaven's sake, Sally,’ says Art, ‘don't exaggerate him more nor he is; the boy is only stunned—see, he's coming to: Dick, ma bouchal, rouse yourself—that's a man: hut! he's well enough—that's it, *alannah*:* here, take a slug out of this bottle, and it'll set all right—or, stop, have you a glass within, Sally?’ ‘Och, musha, not a glass is under the roof wid me,’ says Sally; ‘the last we had was broke the night Barney was christened, and we hadn't one since—but I'll get you an egg-shell †. ‘It'll do as well as the best,’ says Art. And to make a long story short, they sat down, and drank the bottle of whiskey among them. Larry and Sally made it up, and were as great friends as ever; and Dick was made drunk for the bating he got from his father.

“What Art wanted was to buy some oats that Larry had to sell, to run in a private Still, up in the mountains, of coorse, where every Still is kept. Sure enough, Larry sould him the oats, and was to bring them up to the still-house the next night after dark. According to appointment, Art came a short time after night-fall, with two or three young boys along with him. The corn was sacked and put on the horses; but before that was done, they had a dhrop, for Art's pocket and the bottle were ould acquaintances. They all then sat down in Larry's, or, at laste, as many as there were seats for, and fell to it. Larry, however, seemed to be in better humour this night, and more affectionate with Sally and the childher: he'd often look at them, and appear to feel as if *something was over him* ‡: but no one observed that till afterwards.

* My child.

† The ready wit of the Irish is astonishing. It often happens that they have whiskey when neither glasses nor cups are at hand; in which case they are never at a loss. I have seen them use not only egg-shells, but pistol barrels, tobacco boxes, and scooped potatoes, in extreme cases.

‡ This is precisely tantamount to what the Scotch call “*fey*.” It means that he felt as if some fatal doom were over him.

Sally herself seemed kinder to him, and even went over and sat beside him on the stool, and putting her arm about his neck, kissed him in a joking way, wishing to make up, too, for what Art saw the night before—poor thing—but still as if it wasn't *all* a joke, for at times she looked sorrowful. Larry, too, got his arm about her, and looked often and often on her and the childher, in a way that he wasn't used to do, until the tears fairly came into his eyes.

" 'Sally, avourneen,' says he, looking at her, ' I saw you when you had another look from what you have this night ; when it wasn't asy to fellow you *in* the parish or *out* of it ;' and when he said this he could hardly spake.

" ' Whisht, Larry, acushla,' says she, ' don't be spaking that way—sure we may do very well yet, plase God : I know, Larry, there was a great dale of it—maybe, indeed, it was all—*my* fault ; for I wasn't to you, in the way of care and kindness, what I ought to be.'

" ' Well, well, aroon,' says Larry, ' say no more ; you might have been all that, only it was my fault : but where's Dick, that I struck so terribly last night ? Dick, come over to me, agra—come over Dick, and sit down here beside me. Arrah, here, Art, ma bouchal, will you fill this egg-shell for him ?—Poor gorsoon ! God knows, Dick, you get far from fair play, acushla—far from the ating and drinking that other people's childher get, that hasn't as good a skin to put it in as you, alannah ! Kiss me, Dick, acushla—and God knows your face is pale, and that's not with good feeding, any how : Dick, agra, I'm sorry for what I done to you last night ; forgive your father, Dick, for I think that my heart's breaking, acushla, and that you won't have me long with you.'

" Poor Dick, who was naturally a warm-hearted, affectionate gorsoon, kissed his father, and cried bitterly. Sally herself, seeing Larry so sorry for what he done, sobbed as if she would drop on the spot : but the rest began, and betwixt scoulding and cheering them up, all was as well as ever. Still Larry seemed as if there was something entirely very strange the matter with him, for as he was going out, he kissed all the childher, one after another ; and even went over to the young baby that was asleep in the little cradle of boards that he himself had made for it, and kissed it two or three times, asily, for fraid of wakening it. He then met Sally at the door, and catching her hand when none of the rest saw him, squeezed it, and gave her a kiss, saying, ' Sally, darling !' says he.

" ' What ails you, Larry, asthore ?' says Sally.

" ' I don't know,' says he ; ' nothing, I bleeve—but Sally, acushla, I have thrated you badly all along ; I forgot, avourneen, how I loved you *once*, and now it breaks my heart that I have used you so ill.'

" ' Larry,' she answered, ' don't be talking that way, bekase you make me sorrowful and unasy—don't, acushla : God above me knows I forgive you it all. Don't stay long,' says she, ' and I'll borry a lock of meal from Bidy, till we get home our own *meldhree*, and I'll have a dish of stirabout ready to make for you when you come home. Sure, Larry, who'd forgive you, if I, your own wife, wouldn't ? But it's I that wants it from you, Larry ; and in the presence of God, and ourselves, I now beg

your pardon, and ax your forgiveness for all the sin I done to you.' She dropped on her knees, and cried bitterly ; but he raised her up, himself a choaking at the time, and as the poor crathur got to her feet, she laid herself on his breast, and sobbed out, for she couldn't help it. They then went away, though Larry, to tell the thruth, wouldn't have gone with them at all, only that the sacks were borried from his brother, and he had to bring them home, in regard of Tom wanting them the very next day.

"The night was as dark as pitch—so dark, faiks, that they had to get long pieces of bog fir, which they lit, and held in their hands, like the lights that Ned there says the lamp-lighters have in Dublin to light the lamps with.

"At last, with a good dale of trouble, they got to the still-house ; and, as they had all taken a drop before, you may be sure they were better inclined to take another now. They, accordingly, sat down about the fine rousing fire that was under the still, and had a right good jorum of strong whiskey that never seen a drop of water. They all were in very good spirits, not thinking of to-morrow, and caring at the time very little about the world as it went.

"When the night was far advanced, they thought of moving home ; however, by that time they weren't able to stand : but it's one curse of being drunk, that a man doesn't know what he's about for the time, except some few, like that poaching ould fellow, Billy M'Kinny, that's cunninger when he's drunk than when he's sober ; otherwise they would not have ventured out in the clouds of the night, when it was so dark and severe, and they in such a state.

"At last they staggered away together, for their road lay for a good distance in the same direction. The others got on, and reached home as well as they could ; but, although Sally borried the dish of male from her sister-in-law, to have a warm pot of stirabout for Larry, and sat up till the night was more than half gone, waiting for him, yet no Larry made his appearance. The childher, too, all sat up, hoping he'd come home, before they'd fall asleep and miss the supper : at last the crathurs, after running about, began to get sleepy, and one head would fall this way and another that way ; so Sally thought it hard to let them go without getting their share, and accordingly she put down the pot on a bright fire, and made a good lot of stir-about for them, covering up Larry's share in a red earthen dish before the fire.

"This roused them a little ; and they sat about the hearth with their mother, keeping her company with their little chat, till their father would come back.

"The night, for some time before this, got very stormy entirely. The wind *ris*, and the rain fell as if it came out of *methers* *. The house was very cowlid, and the door was bad ; for the wind came in very strong under the foot of it, where the ducks



* An old Irish drinking vessel, of a square form, with a handle or ear on each side, out of which all the family drank successively, or in rotation. The expression above is proverbial.

and hens, and the pig when it was little, used to squeeze themselves in when the family was absent, or afther they went to bed. The wind now came whistling under it; and the ould hat and rags, that stopped up the windies, were blown out half-a-dozen times with such force, that the ashes were carried away almost from the hearth. Sally got very low-spirited on hearing the storm whistling so sorrowfully through the house, for she was afeard that Larry might be out on the dark moors under it; and how any living soul could bear it, she didn't know. The talk of the childer, too, made her worse; for they were debating among themselves, the crathurs, about what he had better do under the tempest; whether he ought to take the sheltry side of a hillock, or get into a long heather bush, or under the ledge of a rock or tree, if he could meet such a thing.

"In the mane time, terrible blasts would come over and through the house, making the ribs crack so that you would think the roof would be taken away at wanst. The fire was now getting low, and Sally had no more turf in the house; so that the childer crouched closer and closer about it, their poor hungry-looking pale faces made paler with fear that the house might come down upon them, or be stripped, and their father from home—and with worse fear that something might happen him under such a tempest of wind and rain as it blew. Indeed it was a pitiful sight to see the ragged crathurs drawing in in a ring nearer and nearer the dying fire; and their poor, naked, half-starved mother, sitting with her youngest infant lying between her knees and her breast: for the bed was too cowlid to put it into it, without being kept warm by the heat of them that it used to sleep with."

"Musha, God help her and them," says Ned, "I wish they were here beside me on this comfortable hob, this minute; I'd fight Nancy to get a fog-meal for them, any way—a body can't but pity them, afther all!"

"You'd fight Nancy!" said Nancy herself—"maybe Nancy would be as willing to do something for the crathurs as you would—I like every body that's able to pay for what they get! but we ought to have some bowels in us for all that. You'd fight Nancy, indeed!"

"Well," continued the narrator, "there they sat, with cowlid and fear in their pale faces, shiverin' over the remains of the fire, for it was now nearly out, and thinking, as the deadly blast would drive through the creaking ould door and the half-stuffed windies, of what their father would do under such a terrible night. Poor Sally, sad and sorrowful, was thinking of all their ould quarrels, and taking the blame all to herself for not bein' more attentive to her business, and more kind to Larry; and when she thought of the way she thrated him, and the ill-tongue she used to give him, the tears began to roll from her eyes, and she rocked herself from side to side, sobbing as if her heart would brake. When the childer saw her wiping her eyes with the corner of the little handkerchief that she had about her neck, they began to cry along with her. At last she thought, as it was now so late, that it would be folly to sit up any longer; she hoped, too, that he might have thought of going into some neighbour's house on his way, to take shelter, and with these thoughts, she raked the *greeshough** over the fire, and afther putting the

* The warm ashes and embers.

childher in their little straw nest, and spreading their own rags over them, she and the young one went to bed, although she couldn't sleep at all at all, for thinking of Larry.

"There she lay, trembling under the light cover of the bed-clothes, for they missed Larry's coat, listening to the dreadful night that was in it, so lonely, that the very noise of the cow, in the other corner, chewing her cud, in the silence of a short calm, was a great relief to her. It was a long time before she could get a wink of sleep, for there was some uncommon weight upon her that she couldn't account for by any chance; but after she had been lying for about half an hour, she heard something that almost fairly knocked her up. It was the voice of a woman, crying and wailing in the greatest distress, as if all belonging to her were *under-board*.

"When Sally heard it first, she thought it was nothing but the whistling of the wind; but it soon came again, more sorrowful than before, and as the storm arose, it rose upon the blast along with it, so strange and mournful, that she never before heard the like of it. 'The Lord be about us!' said she to herself, 'what can that be at all?—or who is it? for it's not Nelly,' maning her sister-in-law. Again she listened, and there it was, sobbing and sighing in the greatest grief, and she thought she heard it louder than ever only that this time it seemed to name whomsoever it was lamenting. Sally now got up and put her ear to the door, to see if she could hear what it said. At this time the wind got calmer, and the voice also got lower; but although it was still sorrowful, she never heard any living Christian's voice so sweet, and what was very odd, it fell in fits, exactly as the storm sunk, and rose as it blew louder.

"When she put her ear to the chink of the door, she heard the words repeated, no doubt of it, only couldn't be quite sure, as they weren't very plain; but as far as she could make any sense out of them, she thought that it said—'Oh, Larry M'Farland!—Larry M'Farland!—Larry M'Farland!' Sally's hair stood on end when she heard this; but on listening again, she thought it was her own name instead of Larry's that it repated, and that it said 'Sally M'Farland!—Sally M'Farland!—Sally M'Farland!' Still she wasn't sure, for the words weren't plain, and all she could think was, that they resembled her own name or Larry's, more than any other words she knew. At last, as the wind fell again, it melted away, weeping most sorrowfully, but so sweetly, that the likes of it was never heard. Sally then went to bed, and the poor woman was so harrished with one thing or another, that at last she fell asleep."

"'Twas the *Banshee*," says Shane Fadh.

"Indeed it was nothing else than that same," replied M'Roarkin.

"I wonder Sally didn't think of that," said Nancy—"sure she might know that no living crathur would be out lamenting under such a night as that was."

"She did think of that," said Tom; "but as no Banshee ever followed *her own** family, she didn't suppose that it could be such a thing; but

* The Banshee in Ireland is, or rather was, said to follow only particular families—principally the old Milosians. It appeared or was heard before the death of any member of the family. Its form was always that of a female—weeping, wailing, wringing its hands, and uttering the national *keens*, or lamentation for the dead. *Banshee* signifies gentle woman.

she forgot that it might follow Larry's. I, myself, heard his brother Tom say, afterwards, that a Banshee used always to be heard before any of them died."

"Did his brother hear it?" Ned inquired.

"He did," said Tom; "and his wife along with him, and knew, at once, that some death would happen in the family—but it wasn't long till he suspected who it came for; for, as he was going to bed that night, on looking towards his own hearth, he thought he saw his brother standing at the fire, with a very sorrowful face upon him. 'Why, Larry,' says he, 'how did you get in, after me barring the door?—or did you turn back from helping them with the corn? You surely hadn't time to go half the way since.'

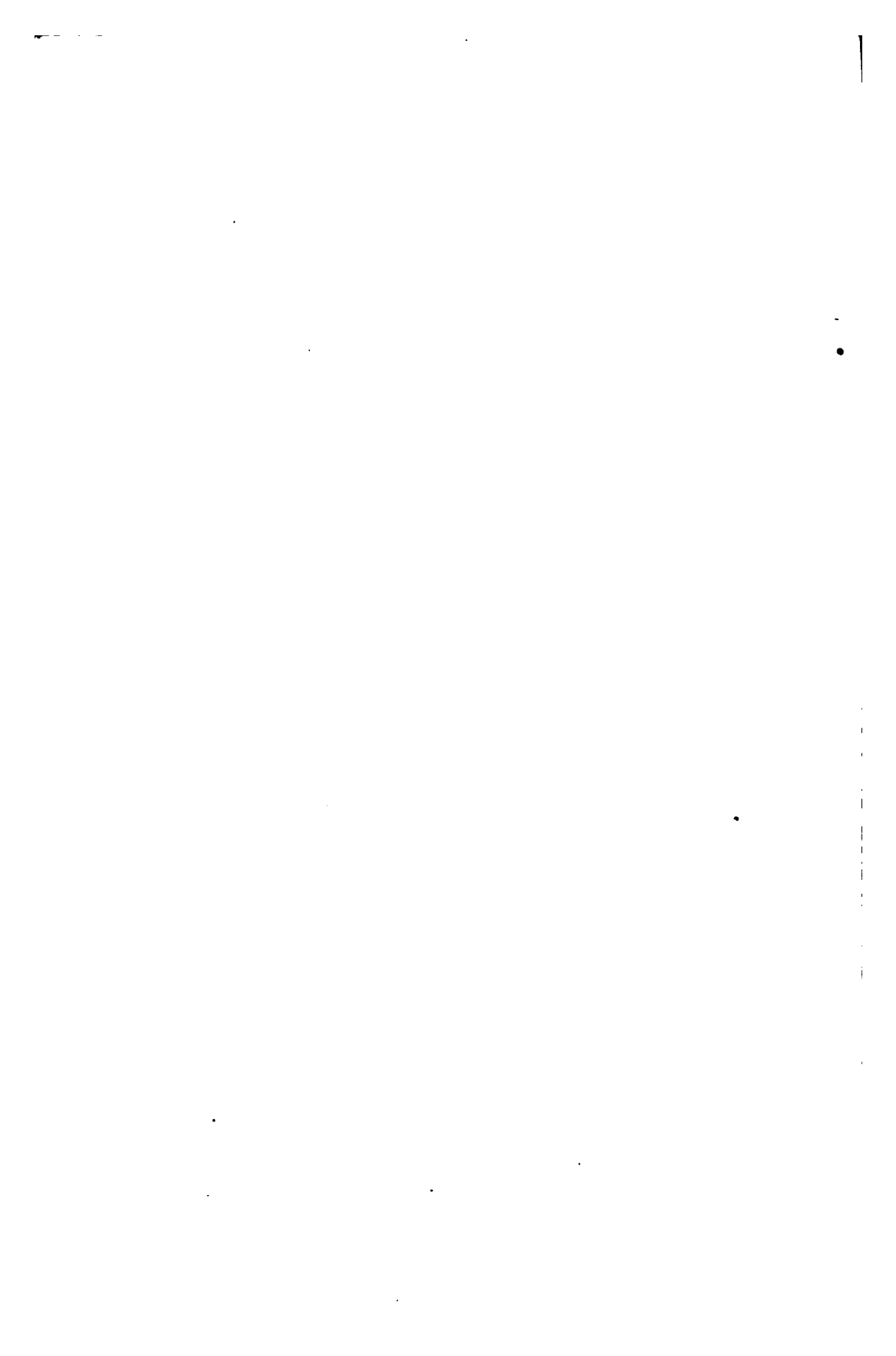
"Larry, however, made him no answer; and, on looking for him again, there was no Larry there for him. 'Nelly,' says he to his wife, 'did you see any sight of Larry since he went to the still-house?' 'Arrah, no indeed, Tom,' says she; 'what's coming over you to spake to the man that's near Drumfurrar by this time?' 'God keep him from harm!' said Tom;—'poor fellow, I wish nothing ill may happen him this night! I'm afeard, Nelly, that I saw his *fetch**; and if I did, he hasn't long to live; for when one's fetch is seen at this time of night, their lease of life, let them be sick or in health, is always short.'

"'Hut, Tom aroon!' says Nelly, 'it was the shadow of the jamb or yourself you saw in the light of the candle, or the shadow of the bed-post.'

"The next morning they were all up, hoping that he would drop in to them. Sally got a creel of turf, notwithstanding her condition, and put down a good fire to warm him; but the morning passed, and no sign of him. She now got very unasy, and mentioned to his brother what she felt, and Tom went up to the still-house to know if he was there, or to try if he could get any tidings of him. But, by the laws! when he heard that he had left that for home the night before, and he in a state of liquor, putting this, and what he had heard and seen in his house together, Tom knew that something must have happened him. He went home again, and on his way had his eye about him, thinking that it would be no miracle, if he'd meet him lying head-foremost in a ditch; however, he did not, but went on, expecting to find him at home before him.

"In the mane time, the neighbours had been all raised to search for him; and, indeed, the hills were alive with people. It was the second day after, that Sally was standing, looking out at her own door towards the mountains, expecting that every man with a blue coat upon him might be Larry, when she saw a crowd of people coming down the hills. Her heart leaped to her mouth, and she sent Dick, the eldest of the sons, to meet them, and run back with word to her if he was among them. Dick went away; but he hadn't gone far when he met his uncle Tom, coming on before the rest.

* This in the North of Ireland is called *wraith*, as in Scotland. The *Fetch* is a spirit that assumes the likeness of a particular person. It does not appear to the individual himself whose resemblance it assumes, but to some of his friends. If it is seen in the morning, it betokens long life; if after sunset, approaching death; after nightfall, immediate death.





The first thing she saw was the body of her husband . . . dead.

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" 'Uncle,' says Dick, 'did you get my father, for I must fly back with word to my mother, like lightning.'

" 'Come here, Dick,' says Tom; 'God help you, my poor *bouchal**!—Come here, and walk alongside of me, for you can't go back to your mother, till I see her first—God help you, my poor *bouchal*, it's you that's to be pitied, this blessed and sorrowful day;' and the poor fellow could by no means keep in the tears. But he was saved the trouble of breaking the dismal tidings to poor Sally; for as she stood watching the crowd, she saw a door carried upon their shoulders, with something like a man stretched upon it. She turned in, feeling as if a bullet had gone through her head, and sat down with her back to the door, for fraid she might see the thruth, for she couldn't be *quite* sure, they were at such a distance. At last she ventured to take another look out, for she couldn't bear what she felt within her, and just as she rose and came to the door, the first thing she saw coming down the hill, a little above the house, was the body of her husband stretched on a door—dead. At that minute her brother-in-law, Tom, just entered, in time to prevent her and the child she had in her arms from falling on the flure. She had seen enough, God help her!—for she took labour that instant, and, in about two hours afterwards, was stretched a corpse beside her husband, with her heart-broken and desolate orphans in an uproar of outher misery about them. That was the end of Larry M'Farland and Sally Lowry; two that might have done well in the world, had they taken care of themselves—avoided fairs and markets—except when they had business there—not given themselves idle fashions, by drinking, or going to dances, and wrought as well for themselves as they did for others."

"But how did he lose his life, at all at all?" inquired Nancy.

"Why, they found his hat in a bog-hole upon the water, and on searching the hole itself, poor Larry was fished up from the bottom of it."

"Well, that's a murdhering sorrowful story," said Shane Fadh: "but you won't be after passing that on us for the wake, any how."

"Well, you must learn patience, Shane," said the narrator, "for you know patience is a virtue."

"I'll warrant you that *Tom* and *his wife* made a better hand of themselves," said Alick M'Kinley, "than Larry and Sally did."

"Ah! I wouldn't fear, Alick," said Tom, "but you would come at the thruth—'tis you that may say they did; there wasn't two in the parish more comfortable than the same two, at the very time that Larry and Sally came by their deaths. It would do you good to look at their hagyar—the corn stacks were so nately roped and trimmed, and the walls so well made up, that a bird could scarcely get into it. Their barn and cowhouse toe, and dwelling-house, were all comfortably thatched, and the windies all glazed, with not a broken pane in them. Altogether they had come on wondherfully; sould a good dale of male and praties every year; so that in a short time they were able to lay by a little money to help to fortune off their little girls, that were growing up fine colleeens, all out."

* Bouchal—Boy.

"And you may add, I suppose," said Andy Morrow, "that they lost no time going to fairs and dances, or other foolish diversions. I'll engage they never were at a dance in the Squire's kitchen; that they never went about losing their time working for others, when their own business was going at sixes and sevens, for want of hands; nor spent their money drinking and thrating a parcel of friends that only laughed at them for their pains; and wouldn't, may be, put one foot past the other to sarve them; nor never fought and abused one another for what they both were guilty of."

"Well," says Tom; "you have saved me some trouble, Mr. Morrow; for you just said, to a hair, what they were. But I mustn't forget to mention one thing that I saw the morning of the berril. We were, about a dozen neighbours of us, talking in the street, just before the door; both the hag-yards were forinst us—Tom's snug and nate—but Charley Lawdher had to go over from where we stood to drive the pig out of poor Larry's. There was one of the stacks with the side out of it, just as he had drawn away the sheaves from time to time; for the stack leaned to one side, and he pulled sheaves out of the other side to keep it straight. Now, Mr. Morrow, wasn't he an unfortunate man? for whoever would go down to Squire Dickson's hayyard, would see the same Larry's handiwork so beautiful and illegant, though his own was in such *brutheen**. Even his barn went to wrack; and he was obliged to thrash his oats in the open air when there would be a frost, and he used to lose one-third of it; and if there came a thaw, 'twould almost brake the crathur."

"God knows," says Nancy, looking over at Ned, very significantly, "and Larry's not alone in neglecting his business; that is, if sartin people were allowed to take their own way; but the truth of it is, that he met with a bad woman †. If he had a careful, sober, industrious wife of his own, that would take care of the house and place—(*Biddy, will you hand me over that other clew out of the windy-stool there, till I finish this stocking for Ned*)—the story would have another ending, any how."

"In throth," said Tom, "that's no more than thruth, Nancy; but he had not, and everything went to the bad with him entirely."

"It's a thousand pities he hadn't yourself, Nancy," said Alick, grinning; "if he had, I havn't the laste doubt at all, but he'd die worth money."

"Go on, Alick—go on, avick; I will give you lave to have your joke, any way; for it's you that's the pattrn to any man that would wish to thrive in the world."

"If Ned dies, Nancy, I don't know a woman I'd prefer; I'm now a *widdy* ‡ these five years; and I feel, somehow, particularly since I began to spend my evenings here, that I'm disremembering very much the ould proverb—'a burnt child dreads the fire.'"

"Thank you, Alick; you think I swallow that: but as for Ned, the never a fear of him; except that an increasing stomach is a sign of some-

* Brutheen is potatoes champed with butter. Anything in a loose, broken, and irregular state, is said to be in *brutheen*—that is, in disorder and confusion.

† Wife.

‡ The peasantry of a great portion of Ireland use this word as applicable to both sexes.

thing; or what's the best chance of all, Alick, for you and me, that he should meet Larry's fate in some of his drunken fits."

"Now, Nancy," says Ned, "there's no use in talking that way: it's only last Thursday, Mr. Morrow, that, in presence of her own brother, Jemmy Connolly, the breeches-maker, and Billy M'Kinny, there, that I put my two five fingers across, and swore solemnly by them five crosses, that, *except my mind changed*, I'd never drink more nor one half pint of spirits, and three pints of porther in a day."

"Oh, hold your tongue, Ned—hold your tongue, and don't make me spake," said Nancy; "God help you! many a time you've put the same fingers across, and many a time your mind has changed; but I'll say no more now—wait till we see how you'll keep it."

"Healts a-piece, your sowsls," said Ned, winking at the company.

"Well, Tom," said Andy Morrow, "about the wake?"

"Och, och! that was the merry wake, Mr. Morrow. *From that day to this I remarked, that, living or dead, them that won't respect themselves, or take care of their families, won't be respected*: and sure enough, I saw full proof of that same at poor Larry's wake. Many a time afterwards I pitied the childher, for if they had seen better, they wouldn't turn out as they did—all but the two youngest, that their uncle took to himself, and reared afterwards; but they had no one to look after them, and how could it be expected from what they seen, that good could come of them? Squire Dickson gave Tom the other seven acres, although he could have got a higher rint from others; but he was an industrious man that desarved encouragement, and he got it."

"I suppose Tom was at the expense of Larry's berrin, as well as of his marriage?" said Alick.

"In throth and he was," said Tom, "although he didn't desarve it from him when he was alive*; seeing he neglected many a good advice that Tom and his dacent woman of a wife often gave him: for all that, blood is thicker than wather—and it's he that waked and berrid him dacently; by the same token that there was both full and plenty of the best over him: and everything, as far as Tom was consarned, dacent and creditable about the place."

"He did it for his own sake, of coorse," said Nancy, "bekase one wouldn't wish, if they had it at all, to see any one belonging to them worse off than another at their wake or berrin."

"Thru for you, Nancy," said M'Roarkin, "and indeed, Tom was well spoken of by the neighbours for his kindness to his brother after his death; and luck and grace attended him for it, and the world flowed upon him before it came to his own turn."

"Well, when a body dies even a natural death, it's wondherful how soon it goes about; but when they come to an untimely one, it spreads like fire on a dry mountain."

"Was there no inquest?" asked Andy Morrow.

"The sorra inquist, not making you an ill answer, sir—the people

* The genuine blunders of the Irish—not those studied for them by men ignorant of their modes of expression and habits of life—are always significant, clear, and full of strong sense and moral truth.

weren't so exact in them days: but any how the man was dead, and what good could an inquist do him? The only thing that grieved them was, that they both died without the priest: and well it might, for it's an awful thing entirely to die without having the clargy's hands over a body. I tould you that the news of his death spread over all the counthry in less than no time. Accordingly, in the coorse of the day, their relations began to come to the place; but, any way, messengers had been sent especially for them.

"The Squire very kindly lent sheets for them both to be laid out in, and mould-candlesticks to hould the lights; and, God he knows, 'twas a grievous sight to see the father and mother both stretched beside one another in their poor place, and their little orphans about them; the gorseons,—them that had sense enough to know their loss,—breaking their hearts, the crathurs, and so hoarse, that they weren't able to cry or spake. But, indeed, it was worse to see the two young things going over, and wanting to get across to waken their daddy and mammy, poor desolit childher!

"When the corpses were washed and dressed, they looked uncommonly well, consitherin'. Larry, indeed, didn't bear death so well as Sally; but you couldn't meet a purtier corpse than she was in a day's travelling. I say, when they were washed and dressed, their friends and neighbours knelt down round them, and offered up a Pather and Ave a-piece, for the good of their sowsls: when this was done, they all raised the keena, stooping over them at a half bend, clapping their hands, and praising them, as far as they could say anything good of them; and, indeed, the crathurs, they were never any one's enemy but their own, so that nobody could say an ill word of either of them. Bad luck to it for potteen-work every day it rises! only for it, that couple's poor orphans wouldn't be left without father or mother as they were; nor poor Hurrish go the grey gate he did, if he had his father living, may be: but having nobody to bridle him in, he took to horse riding for the Squire, and then to staling them for himself. He was hanged afterwards, along with Peter Doraghy Crolly, that shot Ned Wilson's uncle of the Black Hills.

"After the first keening, the friends and neighbours took their sates about the corpse. In a short time, whiskey, pipes, snuff, and tobacco came, and every one about the place got a glass and a fresh pipe. Tom, when he held his glass in his hand, looking at his dead brother, filled up to the eyes, and couldn't for some time get out a word; at last, when he was able to spake—'Poor Larry,' says he, 'you're lying there low before me, and many a happy day we spint with one another. When we were childher,' said he turning to the rest, 'we were never asunder; he was oulder nor me by two years, and can I ever forget the leathering he gave Dick Rafferty long ago, for hitting me with the rotten egg—although Dick was a great dale bigger than either of us. God knows, although you didn't thrive in life, either of you, as you might and could have done, there wasn't a more neighbourly or friendly couple in the parish they lived in; and now, God help them both, and their poor orphans over them! Larry, acushla your health, and Sally yours; and may God Almighty have marcy on both your sowsls!

"After this, the neighbours began to flock in more generally. When any relation of the corpses would come, as soon, you see, as they'd get inside the door, whether man or woman, they'd raise the shout of a keena, and all the people about the dead would begin along with them, stooping over them and clapping their hands as before.

"Well, I said, it's it that was the merry wake, and that was only the thruth, neighbours. As soon as night came, all the young boys and girls from the country side about them flocked to it in scores. In a short time the house was crowded; and maybe there wasn't laughing, and story-telling, and singing, and smoking, and drinking, and crying—all going on; *heller-skeller*, together. When they'd be all in full chorus this way, maybe, some new friend or relation, that wasn't there before, would come in, and raise the keena: of coorse, the youngsters would then keep quiet; and if the person coming in was from the one neighbourhood with any of them that were so merry, as soon as he'd raise the shout, the merry folks would rise up, begin to pelt their hands together, and cry along with him till their eyes would be as red as a ferret's. That once over, they'd be down again at the songs, and divarsion, and divilment—just as if nothing of the kind had taken place: the other would then shake hands with the friends of the corpses, get a glass or two, and a pipe, and in a few minutes be as merry as the best of them."

"Well," said Andy Morrow, "I should like to know if the Scotch and English are such *heorum-skeorum* kind of people as we Irishmen are."

"Musha, in throth I'm sure they're not," says Nancy, "for I believe that Irishmen are like nobody in the wide world but themselves; quare crathurs, that'll laugh or cry, or fight with any one, just for nothing else, good or bad, but company."

"Indeed, and you all know, that what I'm saying's thruth, except Mr. Morrow there, that I'm telling it to, bekase he's not in the habit of going to wakes; although, to do him justice, he's very friendly in going to a neighbour's funeral; and, indeed, *kind father for you**, Mr. Morrow, for it's he that was a raal good hand at going to such places himself.

"Well, as I was telling you, there was great sport going on. In one corner, you might see a knot of ould men sitting together, talking over ould times—ghost stories, fairy tales, or the great rebellion of 41, and the strange story of Lamh Dearg, or the *bloody hand*—that, maybe, I'll tell you all some other night, please God: there they'd sit smoking—their faces quite plased with the pleasure of the pipe—amusing themselves and a crowd of people, that would be listening to them with open mouth. Or, it's odds, but there would be some droll young fellow among them, taking a *rise* out of them; and, positively, he'd often find them able enough for him, particularly ould Ned Mangin, that wanted at the time only four years of a hundred. The Lord be good to him, and rest his soul in glory, it's he that was the pleasant ould man, and could tell a story with any one that ever got up.

"In another corner there was a different set, bent on some piece of divilment of their own. The boys would be sure to get beside their sweethearts,

* That is, in this point you are of the same *kind* as your father; possessing that prominent trait in his disposition or character.

any how; and if there was a purty girl, as you may set it down there was, it's there the *skroodging**, and the pushing, and the shoving, and, sometimes, the knocking down itself, would be, about seeing who'd get her. There's ould Katty Duffy, that's now as crooked as the hind leg of a dog, and it's herself was then as straight as a rush, and as blooming as a rose—Lord bless us, what an alteration time makes upon the strongest and fairest of us!—it's she that was the purty girl that night, and it's myself that gave Frank M'Shane, that's still alive to acknowledge it, the broad of his back upon the flure, when he thought to pull her off my knee. The very gorsoons and girshas were coorting away among themselves, and learning one another to smoke in the dark corners. But all this, Mr. Morrow, took place in the corpse-house, before ten or eleven o'clock at night; after that time the house got too throng entirely, and couldn't hold the half of them; so, by jing, off we set, maning all the youngsters of us, both boys and girls, out to Tom's barn, that was *rad*† up for us, there to commence the plays. When we were gone, the ould people had more room, and they moved about on the sates we had left them. In the mane time, lashings of tobacco and snuff, cut in plate-fulls, and pipes of fresh new pipes, were laid on the table for any one that wished to use them.

“When we got to the barn, it's then we *took our pumps off*‡ in airnest—by the hokey, such sport you never saw. The first play we began was *Hot-loof*; and maybe there wasn't skelping then. It was the two parishes of Errigle-Keeran and Errigle-Truagh against one another. There was the Slip from Aíthadhawan, for Errigle-Truagh, against Pat M'Ardle, that had married Lanty Gorman's daughter of Cargach, for Errigle-Keeran. The way they play it, Mr. Morrow, is this—two young men out of each parish go out upon the flure—one of them stands up, then bends himself, Sir, at a half bend, placing his left hand behind on the back part of his ham, keeping it there to receive what it's to get. Well, there he stands, and the other coming behind him, places his left foot out before him, doubles up the cuff of his coat, to give his hand and wrist freedom: he then rises his right arm, coming down with the heel of his hand upon the other fellow's palm, under him, with full force. By jing, it's the devil's own divarsion; for you might as well get a stroke of a sledge as a blow from one of them able, hard-working fellows, with hands upon them like lime-stone. When the fellow that's down gets it hot and heavy, the man that struck him stands bent in his place, and some friend of the other comes down upon him, and pays him for what the other fellow got.

“In this way they take it, turn about, one out of each parish, till it's over; for, I believe, if they were to pelt one another *since* §, that they'd never give up. Bless my soul, but it was terrible to hear the strokes that the Slip and Pat M'Ardle did give that night. The Slip was a young fellow upwards of six feet, with great able bones and little flesh, but terrible thick *shinnis* ||; his wrist was as hard and strong as a bar of iron. M'Ardle was a low, broad man, with a *rucket* ¶ head and bull neck, and

* The pressure in a crowd.

† Cleared up—set in order.

‡ Threw aside all restraint.

§ From that hour to this.

|| Sinews.

¶ Curled.

a pair of shoulders that you could hardly get your arms about, Mr. Morrow, long as they are; it's he, indeed, that was the firm, well-built chap, entirely. At any rate, a man might as well get a kick from a horse as a stroke from either of them.

"Little Jemmy Teague, I remember, struck a cousin of the Slip's a very smart blow, that made him dance about the room, and blow his fingers for ten minutes after it. Jemmy, himself, was a tight, smart fellow. When the Slip saw what his cousin had got, he rises up, and stands over Jemmy so coolly, and with such good humour, that every one in the house trembled for poor Jemmy, bekase, you see, whenever the Slip was bent on mischief, he used always to grin. Jemmy, however, kept himself bent firm; and to do him justice, didn't flinch from under the stroke, as many of them did—no, he was like a rock. Well, the Slip, as I said, stood over him, fixing himself for the stroke, and coming down with such a pelt on poor Jemmy's hand, that the first thing we saw was the blood across the Slip's own legs and feet, that had burst out of poor Jemmy's finger-ends. The Slip then stooped to receive the next blow himself, and you may be sure there was above two dozen up to be at him. No matter; one man they all gave way to, and that was Pat M'Ardle.

"'Hould away,' says Pat,—'clear off, boys, all of you—this stroke's mine by right, any how;—and,' says he, swearing a terrible oath, 'if you don't sup sorrow for that stroke,' says he to the Slip, 'why Pat M'Ardle's not behind you here.'

"He, then, up with his arm, and came down—why, you would think that the stroke he gave the Slip had druv his hand right into his body: but, any way, it's he that took full satisfaction for what his cousin got; for if the Slip's fingers had been cut off at the tops, the blood couldn't spring out from under his nails more nor it did. After this the Slip couldn't strike another blow, bekase his hand was disabled out and out.

"The next play they went to was the *Sitting Brogue*. This is played by a ring of them, sitting down upon the bare ground, keeping their knees up. A shoemaker's leather apron is then got, or a good stout brogue, and sent round under their knees. In the mane time, one stands in the middle; and after the brogue is sent round, he is to catch it as soon as he can. While he stands there, of coorse, his back must be to some one, and accordingly those that are behind him thump him right and left with the brogue, while he, all the time, is striving to catch it. Whoever he catches this brogue with must stand up in his place, while he sits down where the other had been, and then the play goes on as before.

"There's another play called the *Standing Brogue*—where one man gets a brogue of the same kind, and another stands up facing him with his hands locked together, forming an arch turned upside down. The man that houlds the brogue then strikes him with it betune the hands; and even the smartest fellow receives several pelts before he is able to close his hands and catch it; but when he does, he becomes brogue-man, and the man who held the brogue stands for him, until he catches it. The same thing is gone through, from one to another, on each side, until it is over.

"The next is *Frimsey Framsey*, and is played in this manner:—A chair

or stool is placed in the middle of the fire, and the man who manages the play sits down upon it, and calls his sweetheart, or the prettiest girl in the house. She, accordingly, comes forward, and must kiss him. He then rises up, and she sits down. 'Come now,' he says, 'fair maid—*Frimsey frimsey*, who's your fancy?' She then calls them she likes best, and when the young man she calls comes over and kisses her, he then takes her place, and calls another girl—and so on, smacking away for a couple of hours. Well, throth, it's no wonder that Ireland's full of people; for I believe they do nothing but coort from the time they're the hoith of my leg. I dunna is it true, as I hear Captain Sloethorn's steward say, that the Englishwomen are so fond of Irishmen?'

"To be sure, it is," said Shane Fadh; "don't I remember, myself, when Mr. Fowler went to England—and he as fine looking a young man, at the time, as ever got into a saddle—he was riding up the street of London, one day, and his servant after him—and by the same token he was a thousand pound worse than nothing; but no matter for that, you see luck was before him—what do you think, but a rich dressed livery servant came out, and stopping the Squire's man, axed whose servant he was?"

"'Why, thin,' says Ned Magavran, who was his body servant at the time, 'bad luck to you, you spalpeen, what a question do you ax, and you have eyes in your head!' says he—'hard feeding to you!' says he, 'you vagabone, don't you see I'm my master's?'"

"The Englishman laughed. 'I know that, Paddy,' says he—for they call us all Paddies in England, as if we had only one name among us, the thieves; 'but I wish to know his name,' says the Englishman.

"'You do!' says Ned; 'and by the powers!' says he, 'but you must first tell me which side of the head you'd wish to hear it an.'

"'Oh! as for that,' says the Englishman—not up to him, you see—'I don't care much Paddy, only let me hear it, and where he lives.'

"'Just keep your ground, then,' says Ned, 'till I 'light off this blood-horse of mine'—he was an ould garron that was fattened up, not worth forty shillings—'this blood-horse of mine,' says Ned, 'and I 'll tell you.'

"So down he gets, and lays the Englishman sprawling in the channel.

"'Take that, you vagabone!' says he, 'and it 'll larn you to call people by their right names agin: I was christened as well as you, you spalpeen!'"

"All this time the lady was looking out of the windy, breaking her heart laughing at Ned and the servant; but, behold!—she knew a thing or two, it seems; for, instead of sending a man at all at all, what does she do, but sends her own maid—a very purty girl, who comes up to Ned, putting the same question to him.

"'What's his name, avourneen?' says Ned, melting, to be sure, at the sight of her—'Why, then, darling, who could refuse you anything?—but, you jewel! by the hoky, you must bribe me or I'm dumb,' says he.

"'How could I bribe you?' says she, with a sly smile—for Ned himself was a well-looking young fellow at the time.

"'I 'll show you that,' says Ned, 'if you tell me where you live;

but, for fraid you'd forget it—with them two lips of your own, my darling.'

" 'There, in that great house,' says the maid; 'my mistress is one of the beautifullest and richest young ladies in London, and she wishes to know where your master could be heard of.'

" 'Is that the house?' says Ned, pointing to it.

" 'Exactly,' says she: 'that's it.'

" 'Well, acushla,' says he, 'you've a purty and an innocent-looking face; but I'm tould there's many a trap in London well baited. Just only run over while I'm looking at you, and let me see that purty face of yours smiling at me out of the windy that that young lady is peeping at us from.'

" This she had to do.

" 'My master,' thought Ned, while she was away, 'will aasily find out what kind of a house it is, any how, if that be it.'

" In a short time he saw her in the windy, and Ned then gave her a sign to come down to him.

" 'My master,' says he, 'never was afeard to show his face, or tell his name to any one—he's a Squire Fowler,' says he—'a Sarjen-major in a great militia regiment: he shot five men in his time; and there's not a gentleman in the country he lives in that dare say Boo to his blanket. And now, what's your own name,' says Ned, 'you flattering little blackguard you?'

" 'My name's Betty Cunningham,' says she.

" 'And, next, what's your mistress's, my darling?' says Ned.

" 'There it is,' says she, handing him a card.

" 'Very well,' says Ned, the thief, looking at it with a great air, making as if he could read; 'this will just do, a colleen bawn.'

" 'Do you read in your country with the wrong side of the print up?' says she.

" 'Up or down,' says Ned, 'it's all one to us, in Ireland; but, any how, I'm left-handed, you deluder!'

" The upshot of it was, that her mistress turned out to be a great *hairess*, and a great beauty; and she and Fowler got married in less than a month. So, you see, it's true enough that the Englishwomen *are* fond of Irishmen," says Shane; "but, Tom, with submission for stopping you, go on with your Wake."

"The next play, then, is *Marrying*—"

"Hooch!" says Andy Morrow, "why, all their plays are about kissing and marrying, and the like of that."

"Surely and they are, sir," says Tom.

"It's all the nathur of the baste," says Alick.

"The next is marrying. A bouchal puts an ould dark coat on him, and if he can borry a wig from any of the ould men in the wake-house, why, well and good, he's the liker his work—this is the priest: he takes and drives all the young men out of the house, and shuts the door upon them, so that they can't get in till he lets them. He then ranges the girls all beside one another, and going to the first makes her name him she wishes to be her husband; this she does, of coorse, and the priest lugs

him in, shutting the door upon the rest. He then pronounces this marriage sarvice, when the husband smacks her first, and then the priest:—'Amo amas, avourneen—in nomine gomine, betwuxt and between—for hoc erat in votis, squeeze 'em please 'em—omnia vincit amor, wid two horns to caput nap it—poluphlasboio, the lasses—'Quid,' says Cleopatra; 'Shid,' says Antony—ragibus et clatibus solemus stapere windous—nine months—big bottle, and a honeymoon—Alneas poque Dido poque Roymachree—hum not fiem viat—lag rag, merry kerry, Parawig and breeches—hoc manifestibus omnium—Kiss your wife undher the nose, then seek repose. 'Tis done,' says the priest. 'Vinculum trinculum; and now you're married. Amen!' Well, these two are married, and he places his wife upon his knee, for fraid of taking up too much room, *you persave*; there they coort away again, and why shouldn't they? The priest then goes to the next, and makes her name her husband; this is complied with, and he is brought in after the same manner, but no one else till they're called: he is then married, and kisses his wife, and the priest kisses her after him; and so they're *all* married.

"But if you'd see them that don't chance to be called at all, the figure they cut—slipping into some dark corner, to avoid the mobbing they get from the priest and the others. When they're all united, they must each sing a song—man and wife, according as they sit; or if they can't sing, or get some one to do it for them, they're divorced. But the priest, himself, usually lilts for any one that's not able to give a verse. You see, Mr. Morrow, there's always in the neighbourhood some droll fellow that takes all these things upon him, and if *he* happened to be absent, the wake would be quite dull."

"Well," said Andy Morrow, "have you any more of their sports, Tom?"

"Ay, have I; one of the best and pleasantest you heard yet."

"I hope there's no more coorting in it," says Nancy; "God knows we're tired of their kissing and marrying."

"Were you always so?" says Ned, across the fire to her.

"Behave yourself, Ned," says she; "don't *you* make me spake; sure you were set down as the greatest Brine-oge that ever was known in the parish, for such things."

"No, but don't you make *me* spake," replies Ned.

"Here, Biddy," said Nancy, "bring that uncle of yours another pint; that's what he wants most at the present time, I'm thinking."

Biddy, accordingly, complied with this.

"Don't make *me* spake," continued Ned.

"Come, Ned," she replied, "you've a fresh pint now; so drink it, and give no more *gosther*." *

"*Shuid-urth!*" † says Ned, putting the pint to his head, and winking slyly at the rest.

"Ay, wink! in troth I'll be up to you for that, Ned," says Nancy; by no means satisfied that Ned should enter into particulars. "Well,

* Idle talk—gossip.

† *Shuid-urth*—This to you, or upon you; a form of drinking healths.

Tom," said she, diverting the conversation, "go on, and give us the remainder of your Wake."

"Well," says Tom, "the next play is in the military line. You see, Mr. Morrow, the man that leads the sports places them all on their sates, gets from some of the girls a white handkerchief, which he ties round his hat, as you would tie a piece of mourning; he then walks round them two or three times, singing,

Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
Will you list and come with me, fair maid?
And folly the lad with the white cockade?

When he sings this, he takes off his hat, and puts it on the head of the girl he likes best, who rises up and puts her arm round him, and then they both go about in the same way, singing the same words. She then puts the hat on some young man, who gets up and goes round with them, singing as before. He next puts it on the girl he loves best, who, after singing and going round in the same manner, puts it on another, and he on his sweetheart, and so on. This is called the *White Cockade*. When it's all over, that is, when every young man has pitched upon the girl that he wishes to be his sweetheart, they sit down, and sing songs, and coort, as they did at the marrying.

"After this comes the *Weds* or *Forfeits*, or what they call putting round the button. Every one gives in a forfeit—the boys a neck handkerchief or a pen-knife, and the girls a pocket handkerchief, or something that way. The forfeit is held over them, and each of them stoops in turn. They are, then, compelled to command the person that owns that forfeit to sing a song—to kiss such and such a girl—or to carry some ould man, with his legs about their neck, three times round the house, and this last is always great fun. Or, maybe, a young, upsetting fellow, will be sent to kiss some toothless, slaving, ould woman, just to punish him; or if a young woman is any way saucy, she'll have to kiss some ould, withered fellow, his tongue hanging with age half way down his chin, and the tobacco water trickling from each corner of his mouth.

"By jingo, many a time, when the friends of the corpæ would be breaking their very hearts with grief and affliction, I have seen them obligated to laugh out, in spite of themselves, at the drollery of the priest, with his ould black coat and wig upon him; and when the laughing fit would be over, to see them rocking themselves again with the sorrow—so sad. The best man for managing such sports in this neighbourhood, for many a year, was Roger M'Cann, that lives up as you go to the mountains. You wouldn't begrudge to go ten miles, the cowlddest winter night that ever blew, to see and hear Roger.

"There's another play that they call the *Priest of the Parish*, which is remarkably pleasant. One of the boys gets a wig upon himself, as before—goes out on the fure, places the boys in a row, calls one his *man Jack*, and says to each 'What will you be?' One answers, 'I'll be *black cap*;' another—'*red cap*;' and so on. He then says, 'The priest of the parish has lost his considhering cap—some says this, and some says that, but I say my man Jack! Man Jack, then, to put it off

himself, says, 'Is it me, Sir?' 'Yes, you, Sir!' 'You lie, Sir!' 'Who then, Sir?' 'Black cap!' If Black cap, then, doesn't say, 'Is it me, Sir?' before the priest has time to call him, he must put his hand on his ham, and get a pelt of the brogue. A body must be supple with the tongue in it.

"After this comes one they call *Horns*, or the *Painter*. A droll fellow gets a lump of soot or lamp-black, and after fixing a ring of the boys and girls about him, he lays his two fore-fingers on his knees, and says, 'Horns, horns, cow horns!' and then raises his fingers by a jerk up above his head; the boys and girls in the ring then do the same thing, for the meaning of the play is this:—the man with the black'ning *always* raises his fingers every time he names an animal; but if he names any that has *no* horns, and that the others jerk up their fingers then, they must get a stroke over the face with the soot. 'Horns, horns, goat horns!'—then he ups with his fingers like lightning; they must all do the same, becase a goat *has* horns. 'Horns, horns, horse horns!'—he ups with them again, but the boys and girls ought not, becase a horse has *not* horns; however, any one that raises them *then*, gets a slake. So that it all comes to this:—Any one, you see, that lifts his fingers when an animal is named that has *no* horns—or any one that does *not* raise them when a baste is mitioned that *has* horns, will get a mark. It's a purty game, and requires a keen eye and a quick hand; and, maybe, there's not fun in straiiking the soot over the purty, warm, rosy cheeks of the colleens, while their eyes are dancing with delight in their heads, and their sweet breath comes over so pleasant about one's face, the darlings!—Och! och!

"There's another game they call the *Silly Ould Man*, that's played this way:—A ring of the boys and girls is made on the flure—boy and girl about—holding one another by the hands; well and good—a young fellow gets into the middle of the ring, as 'the silly ould man.' There he stands looking at all the girls to choose a wife, and, in the mane time, the youngsters of the ring sing out—

Here's a silly ould man that lies all alone,
That lies all alone,
That lies all alone;
Here's a silly ould man that lies all alone,
He wants a wife, and he can get none.

"When the boys and girls sing this, the silly ould man must choose a wife from some of the colleens belonging to the ring. Having made choice of her, she goes into the ring along with him, and they all sing out—

Now, young couple, you're married together,
You're married together,
You're married together,
You must obey your father and mother,
And love one another like sister and brother—
I pray, young couple, you'll kiss together!

And you may be sure this part of the marriage is not missed, any way."

"I doubt," said Andy Morrow, "that good can't come of so much kissing, marrying, and coorting."

The narrator twisted his mouth knowingly, and gave a significant groan.

"*Be dhe kusth**. hould your tongue, Misther Morrow," said he; "Biddy avourneen," he continued, addressing Biddy and Bessy, "and Bessy, alannah, just take a friend's advice, and never mind going to wakes; to be sure there's plinty of fun and divarsion at sich places, but—healths apiece!" putting the pint to his lips—"and that's all I say about it."

"Right enough, Tom," observed Shane Fadh—"sure most of the matches are planned at them, and, I may say, most of the *runacays*, too—poor, young, foolish crathurs, going off, and getting themselves married; then bringing small, helpless families upon their hands, without money or manes to begin the world with, and afterwards likely to eat one another out of the face for their folly; however, there's no putting ould heads upon young shoulders, and I doubt, except the wakes are stopped altogether, that it'll be the ould case still."

"I never remember being at a counthry wake," said Andy Morrow. "How is everything laid out in the house?"

"Sure it's to you I'm telling the whole story, Mr. Morrow: these thieves about me here know all about it as well as I do—the house, eh? Why, you see, the two corpses were stretched beside one another, washed and laid out. There were long deal boards with their ends upon two stools, laid over the bodies; the boards were covered with a white sheet got at the big house, so the corpses wern't to be seen. On these, again, were placed large mould candles, plates of cut tobacco, pipes, and snuff, and so on. Sometimes corpses are waked in a bed, with their faces visible: when that is the case, white sheets, crosses, and sometimes flowers, are pinned up about the bed, except in the front; but when they're undher board, a set of ould women sit smoking, and rocking themselves from side to side, quite sorrowful—these are *keenors*—friends or relations; and when every one connected with the dead comes in, they raise the *keens*, like a *song* of sorrow, wailing and clapping their hands.

"The furniture is mostly removed, and sates made round the walls, where the neighbours sit smoking, chatting, and gosthering. The best of aiting and dhrinking that they can afford is provided; and, indeed, there is generally open house, for it's unknown how people injure themselves by their kindness and waste at christenings, weddings, and wakes.

"In regard to poor Larry's wake—we had all this, and more at it; for, as I obsarved a while ago, the man had made himself no friends when he was living, and the neighbours gave a loose to all kinds of divilment when he was dead. Although there's no man would be guilty of any disrespect where the dead are, yet, when a person has led a good life, and conducted themselves dacently and honestly, the young people of the neighbourhood show their respect by going through their little plays and divarsions quieter and with less noise, lest they may give any offence; but, as I said, whenever the person didn't live as they ought to do, there's no stop to their noise and *rollokin*†.

* The translation follows it above.

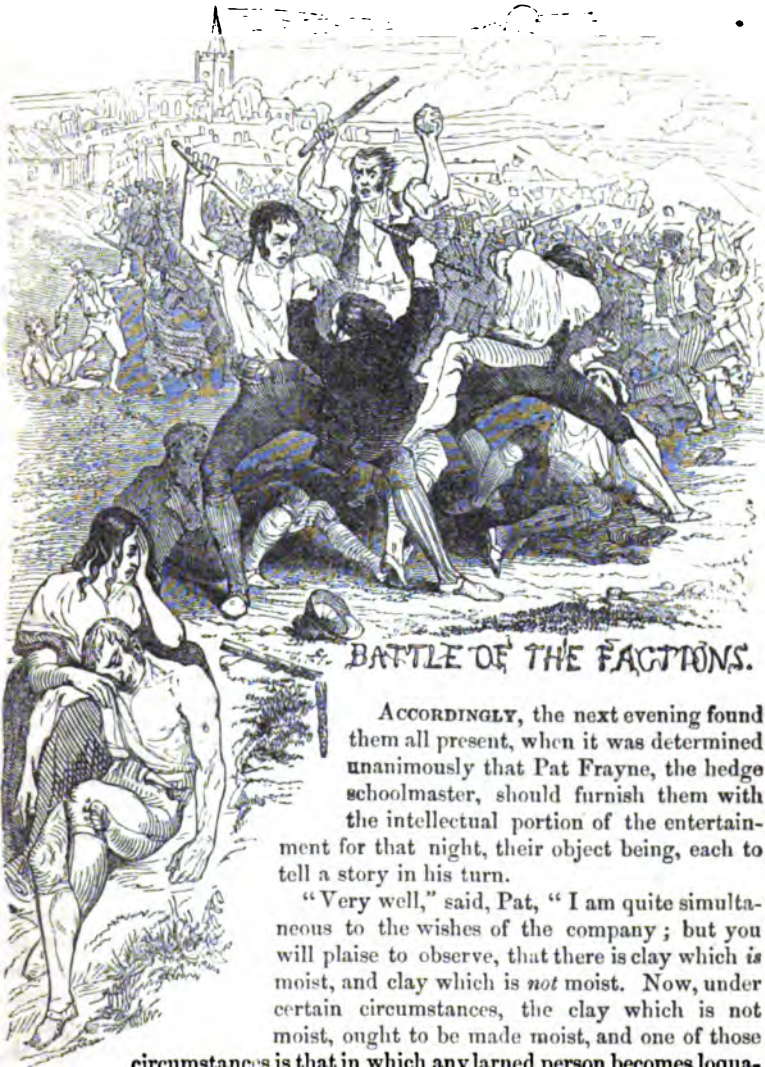
† Uproariousness.

"When it drew near morning, every one of us took his sweetheart, and, after conveying her home, we went to our own houses to get a little sleep—So that was the end of poor Larry M'Farland, and his wife, Sally Lowry."

"Success, Tom!" said Bill M'Kinny; "take a pull of the malt now, after the story, your soul!—But what was the funeral like?"

"Why, then, a poor berrin it was," said Tom; "a miserable sight, God knows—just a few of the neighbours; for those that used to take his thrate, and while he had a shilling in his pocket blarney him up, not one of the skulking thieves showed their faces at it—a good warning to foolish men that throw their money down throats that haven't hearts anundher them.—But, boys, *I* deserve another thrate, I think, after my story!" This, we need scarcely add, he was supplied with, and after some further desultory chat, they again separated, with the intention of re-assembling at Ned's on the following night.





BATTLE OF THE FACTIONS.

ACCORDINGLY, the next evening found them all present, when it was determined unanimously that Pat Frayne, the hedge schoolmaster, should furnish them with the intellectual portion of the entertainment for that night, their object being, each to tell a story in his turn.

"Very well," said, Pat, "I am quite simultaneous to the wishes of the company; but you will please to observe, that there is clay which is moist, and clay which is *not* moist. Now, under certain circumstances, the clay which is not moist, ought to be made moist, and one of those

circumstances is that in which any larned person becomes loquacious, and indulges in narrative. The philosophical *raison*, as decided on by Socrates, and the great Phelim M'Poteen, two of the most celebrated liquorary characters that ever graced the sunny side of a plantation, is, that when a man commences a narration with his clay *not* moist, the said narration is found, by all larned experience, to be a very dry one—chem!"

"Very right, Mr. Frayne," replied Andy Morrow; "so in ordher to avoid a dhry narrative, Nancy, give the mather a jug of your stoutest to wet his whistle, and keep him in wind as he goes along."

. "Thank you, Mr. Morrow—and in requital for your kindness, I will elucidate you such a sample of unadulterated Ciceronian eloquence, as would not be found originating from every chimney-corner in this Province, anyhow. I am not bright, however, at oral relation.—I have accordingly composed into narrative the following tale, which is appellationed 'The Battle of the Factions':—

"My grandfather, Connor O'Callaghan, though a tall, erect man, with white flowing hair, like snow, that falls profusely about his broad shoulders, is now in his eighty-third year: an amazing age, considering his former habits. His countenance is still marked with honesty and traces of hard fighting, and his cheeks ruddy and cudgel-worn; his eyes, though not as black as they often used to be, have lost very little of that nate fire which characterises the eyes of the O'Callaghans, and for which I myself have been—but my modesty won't allow me to allude to that: let it be sufficient for the present to say, that there never was remembered so handsome a man in his native parish, and that I am as like him as one Cork-red phatie is to another. Indeed, it has been often said, that it would be hard to meet an O'Callaghan without a black eye in his head. He has lost his fore-teeth, however, a point in which, unfortunately, I, though his grandson, have a strong resemblance to him. The truth is, they were knocked out of him in rows, before he had reached his thirty-fifth year—a circumstance which the kind reader will be pleased to receive in extenuation for the same defect in myself. That, however, is but a trifle, which never gave either of us much trouble.

"It pleased Providence to bring us through many hair-breadth escapes, with our craniums uncracked; and when we consider that he, on taking a retrogradation of his past life, can indulge in the pleasing recollection of having broken two skulls in his fighting days, and myself one, without either of us getting a fracture in return, I think we have both reason to be thankful. He was a powerful *bulliah battha** in his day, and never met a man able to fight him, except big Mucklemurray, who stood before him the greater part of an hour and a half, in the fair of Knockimdowney, on the day that the first great fight took place—twenty years after the hard frost—between the O'Callaghans and the O'Hallaghans. The two men fought single hands—for both factions were willing to let them try the engagement out, that they might see what side could boast of having the best man. They began where you enter the north side of Knockimdowney, and fought successively up to the other end, then back again to the spot where they commenced, and afterwards up to the middle of the town, right opposite to the market-place, where my grandfather, by the same a-token, lost a grinder; but he soon took satisfaction for that, by giving Mucklemurray a tip above the eye with the end of an oak stick, daently loaded with lead, which made the poor man feel very quare entirely, for the few days that he survived it.

"Faith, if an Irishman happened to be born in Scotland, he would find it mighty inconvenient—after losing two or three grinders in a row—to manage the hard oaten bread that they use there; for which reason, God be good to his sowl that first invented the phaties, anyhow, because a

* Literally, a stroke of cudgel; put for cudgel-player.

man can masticate them without a tooth, at all at all. I'll engage, if larned books were consulted, it would be found out that he was an Irishman. I wonder that neither Pastorini nor Columbkille mentions anything about him in their prophecies consarning the church; for my own part, I'm strongly inclined to believe that it must have been Saint Patrick himself; and I think that his driving all kinds of venomous reptiles out of the kingdom is, according to the Socrastic method of argument, an undeniable proof of it. The subject, to a dead certainty, is not touched upon in the Brehon Code,* nor by any of the three Psalters,† which is extremely odd, seeing that the earth never produced a root equal to it in the multiplying force of proliferation. It is, indeed, the root of prosperity to a fighting people: and many a time my grandfather boasts to this day, that the first bit of *bread* he ever *ett* was a *phatie*.

"In mentioning my grandfather's fight with Mucklemurray, I happened to name them blackguards, the O'Hallaghans: hard fortune to the same set, for they have no more discretion in their quarrels, than so many Egyptian mummies, African buffoons, or any other uncivilised animals. It was one of them, he that's married to my own fourth cousin, Biddy O'Callaghan, that knocked two of my grinders out, for which piece of civility I had the satisfaction of breaking a splinter or two in his carcase, being always honestly disposed to pay my debts.

"With respect to the O'Hallaghans, they and our family have been next neighbours since before the Flood—and that's as good as two hundred years; for I believe it's 198, anyhow, since my great grandfather's grand uncle's ould mare was swept out of the 'Island,' in the dead of the night, about half an hour after the whole country had been *ris* out of their beds by the thunder and lightning. Many a field of oats and many a life, both of beast and Christian, was lost in it, especially of those that lived on the bottoms about the edge of the river: and it was true for them that said it came before *something*; for the *next year* was one of the hottest *summers* ever remembered in Ireland.

"These O'Hallaghans couldn't be at peace with a saint. Before they and our faction began to quarrel, it's said that the O'Donnells, or Donnells, and they had been at it, — and a blackguard set the same O'Donnells were, at all times—in fair and market, dance, wake, and berrin, setting the country on fire. Whenever they met, it was heads cracked and bones broken; till by degrees the O'Donnells fell away, one after another, from fighting, accidents, and hanging; so that at last there was hardly the name of one of them in the neighbourhood. The O'Hallaghans, after this, had the country under themselves—were the cocks of the walk entirely;—who but they? A man darn't look crooked at them, or he was certain of getting his head in his fist. And when they'd get drunk in a fair, it was nothing but 'Whoo! for the O'Hallaghans!' and leaping yards high off the pavement, brandishing their cudgels over

* This was the old code of laws peculiar to Ireland before the introduction of English legislation into it.

† There were properly only two Psalters, those of Tara and Cashel. The Psalters were collections of genealogical history, partly in verse: from which latter circumstance they had their name.

their heads, striking their heels against their hams, tossing up their hats; and when all would fail, they'd strip off their coats, and trail them up and down the street, shouting, 'Who dare touch the coat of an O'Hallaghan? Where's the blackguard Donnells now?'—and so on, till flesh and blood couldn't stand it.

"In the course of time, the whole country was turned against them; for no crowd could get together in which they didn't kick up a row, nor a bit of stray fighting couldn't be, but they'd pick it up first; and if a man would venture to give them a contrary answer, he was sure to get the crame of a good welting for his pains. The very landlord was timorous of them; for when they'd get behind in their *rent*, hard fortune to the bailiff, or proctor, or steward, he could find, that would have anything to say to them. And the more wise they; for maybe, a month would hardly pass till all belonging to them in the world would be in a heap of ashes: and who could say who did it? for they were as cunning as foxes.

"If one of them wanted a wife, it was nothing but find out the purtiest and the richest farmer's daughter in the neighbourhood, and next march into her father's house, at the dead hour of night, tie and gag every mortal in it, and off with her to some friend's place in another part of the country. Then what could be done? If the girl's parents didn't like to give in, their daughter's name was sure to be ruined; at all events, no other man would think of marrying her, and the only plan was, to make the best of a bad bargain; and God he knows, it was making a bad bargain for a girl to have any matrimonial concatenation with the same O'Hallaghans; for they always had the bad drop in them, from first to last, from big to little—the blackguards! But wait, it's not over with them yet.

"The bone of contention that got between them and our faction was his circumstance: their lands and ours were divided by a river that ran down from the high mountains of Sliev Boglish, and, after a course of eight or ten miles, disembogued itself, first into George Duffy's mill-dam, and afterwards into that superb stream, the Blackwater, that might be well and appropriately appellated the Irish Niger. This river, which, though small at first, occasionally inflated itself to such a gigantic altitude, that it swept away cows, corn, and cottages, or whatever else happened to be in the way, was the march ditch, or *merin* between our farms. Perhaps it is worth while remarking, as a solution for natural philosophers, that these inundations were much more frequent in winter than in summer; though, when they did occur in summer, they were truly terrific.

"God be with the days, when I and half a dozen gorsoons used to go out, of a warm Sunday in summer, the bed of the river nothing but a line of white meandering stones, so hot that you could hardly stand upon them, with a small obscure thread of water creeping invisibly among them, hiding itself, as it were, from the scorching sun; except here and there, that you might find a small crystal pool where the streams had accumulated. Our plan was to bring a pocketful of roche lime with us, and put it into the pool, when all the fish used to rise on the instant to the surface, gasping with open mouth for fresh air, and we had only to lift them out of the water; a nate plan, which, perhaps, might be adopted successfully, on a more extensive scale, by the Irish fisheries. Indeed, I almost regret

that I did not remain in that station of life, for I was much happier then than ever I was since I began to study and practice learning. But this is vagating from the subject.

“Well, then, I have said that them O’Hallaghans lived beside us, and that this stream divided our lands. About half a quarter—i. e. to accommodate myself to the vulgar phraseology—or, to speak more scientifically, one-eighth of a mile from our house, was as purty a hazel glen as you’d wish to see, near half a mile long—its developments and proportions were truly classical. In the bottom of this glen was a small green island, about twelve yards, diametrically, of Irish admeasurement, that is to say, be the same more or less; at all events, it lay in the way of the river, which, however, ran towards the O’Hallaghan side, and, consequently, the island was our property.

“Now, you’ll observe, that this river had been, for ages, the merin between the two farms, for they both belonged to separate landlords, and so long as it kept the O’Hallaghan side of the little peninsula in question there could be no dispute about it, for all was clear. One wet winter, however, it seemed to change its mind upon the subject; for it wrought and wore away a passage for itself on our side of the island, and by that means took part, as it were, with the O’Hallaghans, leaving the territory which had been our property for centhries, in their possession. This was a vexatious change to us, and, indeed, eventually produced very feudal consequences. No sooner had the stream changed sides, than the O’Hallaghans claimed the island as theirs, according to their tenement; and we, having had it for such length of time in our possession, could not break ourselves of the habitude of occupying it. They incarcerated our cattle, and we incarcerated theirs. They summoned us to their landlord, who was a magistrate; and we summoned them to ours, who was another. The verdicts were north and south. Their landlord gave it in favour of them, and ours in favour of us. The one said he had law on his side; the other, that he had proscription and possession, length of time and usage.

“The two squires then fought a challenge upon the head of it, and what was more singular, upon the disputed spot itself; the one standing on their side, the other on ours; for it was just *twelve paces* every way. Their friend was a small, light man, with legs like drumsticks; the other was a large, able-bodied gentleman, with a red fae and hooked nose. They exchanged two shots, one only of which—the second—took effect. It pastured upon their landlord’s spindle leg, on which he held it out, exclaiming, that while he lived he would never fight another challenge with his antagonist, ‘because,’ said he, holding out his own spindle shank, ‘the man who could hit *that* could hit *anything*.’

“We then were advised, by an attorney, to go to law with them; and they were advised by another attorney to go to law with us: accordingly, we did so, and in the course of eight or nine years it might have been decided, but just as the legal term approximated in which the decision was to be announced, the river divided itself with mathematical exactitude on each side of the island. This altered the state and law of the question *in toto*; but, in the mean time, both we and the O’Hallaghans were nearly fractured by the expenses. Now during the law-suit we

usually loughed and mutilated each other's cattle, according as they trespassed the premises. This brought on the usual concomitants of various battles, fought and won by both sides, and occasioned the law-suit to be dropped; for we found it a mighty inconvenient matter to fight it out both ways; by the same a-token that I think it a proof of stultity to go to law at all at all, as long as a person is able to take it into his own management. For the only incongruity in the matter is this: that, in the one case, a set of lawyers have the law in *their* hands, and, in the other, that you have it in *your own*; that's the only difference, and 'tis easy knowing where the advantage lies.

"We, however, paid the most of the expenses, and would have *ped* them all with the greatest integrity, were it not that our attorney, when about to issue an execution against our property, happened somehow to be shot, one evening, as he returned home from a dinner which was given by him that was attorney for the O'Hallaghans. Many a boast the O'Hallaghans made, before the quarrelling between us and them commenced, that they'd sweep the streets with the *fighting* O'Callaghans, which was an epithet that was occasionally applied to our family. We differed, however, materially from them; for we were honourable, never starting out in dozens on a single man or two, and beating him into insignificance. A couple, or maybe, when irritated, three, were the most we ever set at a single enemy; and if we left him lying in a state of imperception, it was the most we ever did, except in a regular confliction, when a man is justified in saving his own skull by breaking one of an opposite faction. For the truth of the business is, that he who breaks the skull of him who endeavours to break his own is safest; and, surely, when a man is driven to such an alternative, the choice is unhesitating.

"O'Hallaghans' attorney, however, had better luck: they were, it is true, rather in the retrograde with him touching the law charges, and, of coorse, it was only candid in him to look for his own. One morning, he found that two of his horses had been executed by some *incendiary* unknown, in the coorse of the night; and, on going to look at them, he found a taste of a notice posted on the inside of the stable-door, giving him intelligence that if he did not find a *horpus corpus** whereby to transfer his body out of the country, he would experience a fate parallel to that of his brother lawyer or the horses. And, undoubtedly, if honest people never perpetrated worse than banishing such varmin, along with proctors, and drivers of all kinds, out of a civilised country, they would not be so very culpable or atrocious.

"After this, the lawyer went to reside in Dublin; and the only bodily injury he received was the death of a land-agent and a bailiff, who lost their lives faithfully in driving for rent. They died, however, successfully; the bailiff having been provided for nearly a year before the agent was sent to give an account of his stewardship—as the Authorised Version has it.

"The occasion on which the first rencounter between us and the O'Hallaghans took place, was a peaceable one. Several of our respective

* *Habcas corpus*: the above is the popular pronouciation.

friends undertook to produce a friendly and oblivious potation between us—it was at a berrin belonging to a corpse who was related to us both; and, certainly, in the beginning we were all as thick as whigged milk. But there is no use now in dwelling too long upon that circumstance: let it be sufficient to assert that the accommodation was effectuated by fists and cudgels, on both sides—the first man that struck a blow being one of the friends that wished to bring about the tranquillity. From that out the play commenced, and God he knows when it may end; for no dacent faction could give in to another faction without losing their character, and being kicked, and cuffed, and kilt, every week in the year.

“It is the *great battle*, however, which I am after going to describe: that in which we and the O’Hallaghans had contrived, one way or other, to have the parish divided—one-half for them, and the other for us; and, upon my credibility, it is no exaggeration to declare that the whole parish, though ten miles by six, assembled itself in the town of Knockimdowny, upon this interesting occasion. In thruth, Ireland ought to be a land of mathemathitians; for I am sure her population is well trained, at all events, in the two sciences of *multiplication* and *division*. Before I adventure, however, upon the narration, I must wax pathetic a little, and then proceed with the main body of the story.

“Poor Rose O’Hallaghan!—or, as she was designated—*Rose Galh*, or *Fair Rose*, and sometimes simply, Rose Hallaghan, because the detention of the big O often produces an afflatus in the pronounciation, that is sometimes mighty inconvenient to such as do not understand oratory—besides, that the Irish are rather fond of sending the liquids in a gutthural direction—Poor Rose! that faction *fight* was a black *day* to her, the sweet innocent! when it was well known that there wasn’t a man, woman, or child, on either side, that wouldn’t lay their hands under her feet. However, in order to *insense* the reader better into her character, I will commence a small sub-narration, which will afterwards emerge into the parent stream of the story.

“The chapel of Knockimdowny is a slated house, without any ornament, except a set of wooden cuts, painted red and blue, that are placed *seriatim* around the square of the building in the internal side. Fourteen* of these suspind at equal distances on the walls, each set in a painted frame; these constitute a certain species of country devotion. It is usual, on Sundays, for such of the congregation as are most inclined to piety, to genuflect at the first of these pictures, and commence a certain number of prayers to *it*; after the repetition of which, they travel on their knees along the bare earth to the second, where they repate another prayer peculiar to *that*, and so on, till they finish the grand *tower* of the interior. Such, however, as are not especially addicted to this kind of locomotive prayer, collect together in various knots through the chapel, and amuse themselves by auditing or narrating anecdotes, discussing policy, or detraction; and in case it be summer, and the day of a fine texture, they scatter themselves into little crowds on the chapel-green, or lio at their length upon the grass in listless groups, giving way to chat and laughter.

* These are called the “Fourteen Stations of the Cross.”

In this mode, laired on the sunny side of the ditches and hedges, or collected in rings round that respectable character, the Academician of the village, or some other well-known *Senachie*, or story-teller, they amuse themselves till the priest's arrival. Perhaps, too, some walking geographer of a pilgrim may happen to be present; and if there be, he is sure to draw a crowd about him, in spite of all the efforts of the learned Academician to the contrary. It is no unusual thing to see such a vagrant, in all the vanity of conscious sanctimony, standing in the middle of the attentive peasants, like the nave and feloes of a cart-wheel—if I may be permitted the loan of an apt similitude—repeating some piece of unfathomable and labyrinthine devotion, or perhaps warbling, from Stentorian lungs, some *melodia sacra*, in an untranslatable tongue; or, it may be, exhibiting the mysterious power of an amber bade, fastened as a Decade to his *paudareens**, lifting a chaff or light bit of straw by the force of its attraction. This is an exploit which causes many an eye to turn from the bades to his own bearded face, with a hope, as it were, of being able to catch a glimpse of the lurking sanctimony by which the knave hoaxes them in the miraculous.

“The amusements of the females are also nearly such as I have drafted out. Nosegays of the darlings might be seen sated on green banks, or sauntering about with a sly intention of coming in compact with their sweethearts, or, like bachelors' buttons in smiling rows, criticising the young men as they pass. Others of them might be seen screened behind a hedge, with their backs to the spectators, taking the papers off their curls before a small bit of looking-glass placed against the ditch; or perhaps putting on their shoes and stockings—which phrase can be used only by authority of the figure *heusteron proteron*—inasmuch as if they put on the shoes first, you persave, it would be a scientific job to get on the stockings after; but it's an idiomatical expression, and therefore justifiable. However, it's a general custom in the country, which I dare to say has not yet spread into large cities, for the young women to walk barefooted to the chapel, or within a short distance of it, that they may exhibit their bleached thread stockings and well-greased slippers to the best advantage, not premitting a well-turned ankle and neat leg, which, I may fearlessly assert, my fair countrywomen can show against any other nation living or dead.

“One sunny Sabbath, the congregation of Knockimdowney were thus assimilated, amusing themselves in the manner I have just outlined: a series of country girls sat on a little green mound, called the Rabbit Bank, from the circumstance of its having been formerly an open burrow, though of late years it has been closed. It was near twelve o'clock, the hour at which Father Luke O'Shaughran was generally seen topping the rise of the hill at Larry Mulligan's public-house, jogging on his bay hack at something between a walk and a trot—that is to say, his horse moved his fore and hind legs on the off side at one motion, and the fore and hind legs of the near side in another, going at a kind of dog's trot, like the pace of an idiot with sore feet in a shower—a pace, indeed, to which the

* Pilgrims and other impostors pass these things upon the people as miracles upon a small scale.

animal had been set for the last sixteen years, but beyond which, no force, or entreaty, or science, or power, either divine or human, of his Reverence could drive him. As yet, however, he had not become apparent; and the girls already mentioned were discussing the pretensions which several of their acquaintances had to dress or beauty.

“ ‘Peggy,’ said Katty Carroll to her companion, Peggy Donehoe, ‘were you *out** last Sunday?’

“ ‘No, in troth, Katty, I was disappointed in getting my shoes from Paddy Mellon †, though I left him the measure of my foot three weeks ago, and gave him a thousand warnings to make them *duck-nobs*; but, instead of that,’ said she, holding out a very purty foot, ‘he has made them as sharp in the toe as a pick-axe, and a full mile too short for me. But why do ye ax was I *out*, Katty?’

“ ‘Oh, nothing,’ responded Katty, ‘only that you missed a sight, any way.’

“ ‘What was it, Kitty, a-hagur?’ asked her companion with mighty great curiosity.

“ ‘Why, nothing less, indeed, nor Rose Cullenan decked out in a white muslin gown, and a black sprush bonnet, tied under her chin wid a silk ribbon, no less; but what killed us out and out was—you wouldn’t guess?’

“ ‘Arrah, how could I guess, woman alive? A silk handkerchy, maybe; for I wouldn’t doubt the same Rose but she would be setting herself up for the likes of such a thing.’

“ ‘It’s herself that had, as red as scarlet, about her neck; but that’s not it.’

“ ‘Arrah, Katty, tell it to us at wanst; out with it, a-hagur; sure there’s no treason in it, anyhow.’

“ ‘Why, thin, nothing less nor a crass-bar red-and-white pocket-handkerchy, to wipe her purty complexion wid!’

“ To this Peggy replied by a loud laugh, in which it was difficult to say whether there was more of sathir than astonishment.

“ ‘A pocket-handkerchy!’ she exclaimed; ‘musha, are we alive afther that, at all at all! Why, that bates Molly M’Cullagh and her red mantle entirely. I’m sure, but it’s well come up for the likes of her, a poor, imperint crathur, that sprung from nothing, to give herself siah airs.’

“ ‘Molly M’Cullagh, indeed,’ said Katty; ‘why, they oughtn’t to be mintoned in the one day, woman. Molly’s come of a dacent ould stock, and kind mother for her to keep herself in genteel order at all times:

* Out.—This expression in remote parts of the country is understood to mean being at mass.

† Paddy Mellon—a short, thickest man, with grey hair, which he always kept cropped close—was the most famous shoemaker in the parish; in fact, the Drummond of a large district. No shoes were considered worth wearing if *he* did not make them. But, having admitted this, I am bound in common justice and honesty to say that so big a liar never put an awl into leather. No language could describe his iniquity in this respect. I myself am a living witness of this. Many a trudge has the villain taken out of me in my boyhood; and as sure as I went on the appointed day—which was always Saturday—so surely did he swear that they would be ready for me on that day week. He was, as a tradesman, the most multifarious and barefaced liar I ever met; and what was the most rascally trait about him, was the faculty he possessed of making you believe the lie as readily after the fifteenth repetition of it, as when it was uttered fresh from his lips.

she sees nothing else, and can afford it, not all as one as the other *flips* *, that would go to the world's end for a bit of dress.'

" 'Sure she thinks she's a beauty, too, if you please,' said Peggy tossing her head with an air of disdain; 'but tell us, Katty, how did the muslin sit upon her at all, the upsetting crathur?'

" 'Why, for all the world like a shift on a Maypowl, or a stocking on a body's nose: only nothing killed us outright but the pocket-handkerchy!'

" 'Hut!' said the other, 'what could we expect from a proud piece like her, that brings a Manwill † to mass every Sunday, purtending she can read in it, and Jem Finigan saw the wrong side of the book *toards* her, the Sunday of the *Purcession* !' ‡

" At this hit they both formed another risible junction, quite as sarcastic as the former—in the midst of which the innocent object of their censure, dressed in all her obnoxious finery, came up and joined them. She was scarcely sated—I blush to the very point of my pen during the manuscript—when the confabulation assumed a character directly antipodial to that which marked the precedent dialogue.

" 'My gracious, Rose, but that's a purty thing you have got in your gown!—where did you buy it?'

" 'Och, thin, not a one of myself likes it over much. I'm sorry I didn't buy a gingham: I could have got a beautiful pattrern, all out, for two shillings less; but they don't wash so well as this. I bought it in Paddy McGartland's, Peggy.'

" 'Troth, it's nothing else but a great beauty; I didn't see anything on you this long time that becomes you so well, and I've remarked that you always look best in white.'

" 'Who made it, Rose?' inquired Katty; 'for it sits illegant.'

" 'Indeed,' replied Rose, 'for the differ of the price, I thought it better to bring it to Peggy Boyle, and be sartin of not having it spoiled. Nelly Keenan made the last; and although there was a full breadth more in it nor this, bad cess to the one of her but spoiled it on me; it was ever so much too short in the body, and too tight in the sleeves, and then I had no step at all at all.'

" 'The sprush bonnet is exactly the fit for the gown,' observed Katty; 'the black and the white 's jist the cut—how many yards had you, Rose?'

" 'Jist ten and a half; but the half-yard was for the tucks.'

" 'Ay, faix! and brave full tucks she left in it; ten would do *me*, Rose?'

" 'Ten!—no, nor ten and a half; you're a size bigger nor me at the laste, Peggy; but you'd be asy fitted, you're so *well* made.'

" 'Rose, *darling*,' said Peggy, 'that's a great beauty, and shows off your complexion all to pieces: you have no notion how well you look in it and the sprush.'

* *Flipse*—One who is "flippant"—of which word it is the substantive, and a good one too.

† *Manual*—a Catholic Prayer-book.

‡ The priest described in "Ned M'Keown" having been educated on the Continent, was one of the first to introduce the Procession of the Host in that part of the country. The Consecrated Host, shined in a silver vessel formed like a chalice, was borne by a priest under a silken canopy; and to this the other clergymen present offered up incense from a censer, whilst they circumambulated the chapel inside and out, if the day was fine.

"In a few minutes after this her namesake, Rose Gah O'Hallaghan, came towards the chapel, in society with her father, mother, and her two sisters. The eldest, Mary, was about twenty-one; Rose, who was the second, about nineteen, or scarcely that; and Nancy, the junior of the three, about twice seven.

"'There's the O'Hallaghans,' says Rose.

"'Ay,' replied Katty; 'you may talk of beauty, now; did you ever lay your two eyes on the likes of Rose for downright—musha, if myself knows what to call it—but, anyhow, she's the lovely crathur to look at.'

"Kind reader, without a single disrespectful insinuation against any portion of the fair sex, you may judge what Rose O'Hallaghan must have been, when even these three were necessitated to praise her *in her absence!*

"'I'll warrant,' observed Katty, 'we'll soon be after seeing John O'Callaghan,—(he was my own cousin,)—'sthrolling aafter them, at his ase.'

"'Why,' asked Rose, 'what makes you say that?'

"'Bekase,' replied the other, 'I've a rason for it.'

"'Sure John O'Callaghan wouldn't be thinking of her,' observed Rose, 'and their families would see other shot: their factions would never have a crass-marriage, anyhow.'

"'Well,' said Peggy, 'it's the thousand pities that the same two couldn't go together; for fair and handsome as Rose is, you'll not deny but John comes up to her: but, faix! sure enough it's they that's the proud people on both sides, and dangerous to make or meddle with, not saying that ever there was the likes of the same two for dacency and peaceableness among either of the factions.'

"'Didn't I tell yez?' cried Katty; 'look at him now, staling aafter her: and it'll be the same thing going home again; and, if Rose is not much belied, it's not a bit displasing to her.'

"'Between ourselves,' observed Peggy, 'it would be no wondher the darling young crathur would fall in love with him; for you might thravel the country afore you'd meet with his fellow for face and figure.'

"'There's Father Ned,' remarked Katty; 'we had betther get into the chapel before the *scroodgin* comes an, or your bonnet and gown, Rose, won't be the betther for it.'

"They now proceeded to the chapel, and those who had been amusing themselves after the same mode, followed their exemplar. In a short time the hedges and ditches adjoining the chapel were quite in solitude, with the exception of a few persons from the extreme parts of the parish, who might be seen running with all possible velocity 'to overtake mass,' as the phrase on that point expresses itself.

"The chapel of Knockimdowney was situated at the foot of a range of lofty mountains; a bye-road went past the very door, which had under subjection a beautiful extent of cultivated country, diversified by hill and dale, or rather by hill and hollow; for, as far as my own geographical knowledge goes, I have uniformly found them inseparable. It was also ornamented with the waving verdure of rich corn-fields and meadows,

not premitting phatie-fields in full blossom—a part of rural landscape which, to my utter astonishment, has escaped the pen of poet, and the brush of painter; although I will risk my reputation as a man of pure and categorical taste, if a finer ingredient in the composition of a landscape could be found than a field of Cork-red phaties* or Moroky *blacks* in full bloom, allowing a man to judge by the pleasure they confer upon the eye, and therefore to the heart. About a mile up from the chapel, towards the south, a mountain-stream—not the one already intimated—over which there was no bridge, crossed the road. But in lieu of a bridge, there was a long double plank laid over it, from bank to bank; and as the river was broad, and not sufficiently incarcerated within its channel, the neighbours were necessitated to throw these planks across the narrowest part they could find in the contiguity of the road. This part was consequently the deepest, and, in floods, the most dangerous; for the banks were elevated as far as they went, and quite tortuousitous.

“Shortly after the priest had entered the chapel, it was observed that the hemisphere became, of a sudden, unusually obscure, though the preceding part of the day had not only been uncloudouly bright, but hot in a most especial manner. The obscurity, however, increased rapidly, accompanied by that gloomy stillness which always takes precedence of a storm, and fills the mind with vague and interminable terror. But this ominous silence was not long unfractured; for soon after the first appearance of the gloom, a flash of lightning quivered through the chapel, followed by an extravagantly loud clap of thunder, which shook the very glass in the windows, and filled the congregation to the brim with terror. Their dismay, however, would have been infinitely greater, only for the presence of his Reverence, and the confidence which might be traced to the solemn occasion on which they were assimilated.

“From this moment the storm became progressive in dreadful magnitude, and the thunder, in concomitance with the most vivid flashes of lightning, pealed through the sky, with an awful grandeur and magnificence, that were exalted and even rendered more sublime by the still solemnity of religious worship. Every heart now prayed fervently—every spirit shrunk into a deep sense of its own guilt and helplessness—and every conscience was terror-stricken, as the voice of an angry God thundered out of his temple of storms through the heavens; for truly, as the Authorised Version has it, ‘darkness was under his feet, and his pavilion round about was dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies, because he was wroth.’

“The rain now condescended in even-down torrents, and thunder succeeded thunder in deep and terrific peals, whilst the roar of the gigantic echoes that deepened and reverberated among the glens and hollows, ‘laughing in their mountain mirth,’—hard fortune to me, but they made the flesh creep on my bones!

“This lasted for an hour, when the thunder slackened: but the rain still continued. As soon as mass was over, and the storm had elapsed,

* The Engraving at the end of this Tale represents the real Cork red-drawn from the *stone* itself by Mr. MacManus.

except an odd peal which might be heard rolling at a distance behind the hills, the people began gradually to recover their spirits, and enter into confabulation ; but to venture out was still impracticable. For about another hour it rained incessantly, after which it ceased ; the hemisphere became lighter—and the sun shone out once more upon the countenance of nature with his former brightness. The congregation then decanted itself out of the chapel—the spirits of the people dancing with that remarkable buoyancy or juvenility which is felt after a thunderstorm, when the air is calm, soople, and balmy—and all nature garmented with glittering verdure and light. The crowd next began to commingle on their way home, and to make the usual observations upon the extraordinary storm which had just passed, and the probable effect it would produce on the fruit and agriculture of the neighbourhood.

“When the three young women whom we have already introduced to our respectable readers had evacuated the chapel, they determined to substantiate a certitude, as far as their observation could reach, as to the truth of what Kitty Carroll had hinted at, in reference to John O’Callaghan’s attachment to Rose Galh O’Hallaghan, and her taciturn approval of it. For this purpose they kept their eye upon John, who certainly seemed in no especial hurry home, but lingered upon the chapel green in a very careless method. Rose Galh, however, soon made her appearance, and, after going up the chapel-road a short space, John slyly walked at some distance behind, without seeming to pay her any particular notice, whilst a person up to the secret might observe Rose’s bright eye sometimes peeping back to see if he was after her. In this manner they proceeded until they came to the river, which, to their great alarm, was almost fluctuating over its highest banks.

“A crowd was now assembled, consulting as to the safest method of crossing the planks, under which the red boiling current ran, with less violence, it is true, but much deeper than in any other part of the stream. The final decision was, that the very young and the old, and such as were feeble, should proceed by a circuit of some miles to a bridge that crossed it, and that the young men should place themselves on their knees along the planks, their hands locked in each other, thus forming a support on one side, upon which such as had courage to venture across might lean, in case of accident or megrim. Indeed, anybody that had able nerves might have crossed the planks without this precaution, had they been dry ; but, in consequence of the rain, and the frequent attrition of feet, they were quite slippery ; and, besides, the flood rolled terrifically two or three yards below them, which might be apt to beget a megrim that would not be felt if there was no flood.

“When this expedient had been hit upon, several young men volunteered themselves to put it in practice ; and in a short time a considerable number of both sexuals crossed over, without the occurrence of any unpleasant accident. Paddy O’Hallaghan and his family had been stationed for some time on the bank, watching the success of the plan ; and as it appeared not to be attended with any particular danger, they also determined to make the attempt. About a perch below the planks stood John

O'Callaghan, watching the progress of those who were crossing them, but taking no part in what was going forward. The river under the planks, and for some perches above and below them, might be about ten feet deep ; but to those who could swim it was less perilous, should any accident befall them, than those parts where the current was more rapid, but shallower. The water here boiled, and bubbled, and whirled about ; but it was slow, and its yellow surface unbroken by rocks or fords.

" The first of the O'Hallaghans that ventured over it was the youngest, who, being captured by the hand, was encouraged by many cheerful expressions from the young men who were clinging to the planks. She got safe over, however ; and when she came to the end, one who was stationed on the bank gave her a joyous pull, that translated her several yards upon *terra firma*.

" ' Well, Nancy,' he observed, '*you 're* safe, anyhow ; and if I don't dance at your wedding for this, I'll never say you 're dacent.'

" To this Nancy gave a jocular promise, and he resumed his station, that he might be ready to render similar assistance to her next sister. Rose Galh then went to the edge of the plank several times, but her courage as often refused to be forthcoming. During her hesitation, John O'Callaghan stooped down, and privately untied his shoes, then unbuckled his waistcoat, and very gently, being unwilling to excite notice, slipped the knot of his cravat. At long last, by the encouragement of those who were on the plank, Rose attempted the passage, and had advanced as far as the middle of it, when a fit of dizziness and alarm seized her with such violence, that she lost all consciousness—a circumstance of which those who handed her along were ignorant. The consequence, as might be expected, was dreadful ; for as one of the young men was receiving her hand, that he might pass her to the next, she lost her momentum, and was instantaneously precipitated into the boiling current.

" The wild and fearful cry of horror that succeeded this cannot be laid on paper. The eldest sister fell into strong convulsions, and several of the other females fainted on the spot. The mother did not faint ; but, like Lot's wife, she seemed to be translated into stone : her hands became clenched convulsively, her teeth locked, her nostrils dilated, and her eyes shot half way out of her head. There she stood, looking upon her daughter struggling in the flood, with a fixed gaze of wild and impotent frenzy, that, for fearfulness, beat the thunderstorm all to nothing. The father rushed to the edge of the river, oblivious of his incapability to swim, determined to save her or lose his own life, which latter would have been a *dead* certainty, had he ventured ; but he was prevented by the crowd, who pointed out to him the madness of such a project.

" ' For God's sake, Paddy, don't attempt it,' they exclaimed, ' except you wish to lose your own life, without being able to save hers : no man could swim in that flood, and it upwards of ten feet deep.'

" Their arguments, however, were lost upon him ; for, in fact, he was insensible to everything but his child's preservation. He, therefore, only answered their remonstrances by attempting to make another plunge into the river.

“ ‘ Let me alone, will yez,’ said he—‘ let me alone ! I’ll either save my child, Rose, or die along with her ! How could I live after her ? Merciful God, any of them but *her* ! Oh ! Rose, darling,’ he exclaimed, ‘ the favourite of my heart—will no one save you ? ’ All this passed in less than a minute.

“ Just as these words were uttered, a plunge was heard a few yards below the bridge, and a man appeared in the flood, making his way with rapid strokes to the drowning girl. Another cry now arose from the spectators: ‘ It’s John O’Callaghan,’ they shouted—‘ it’s John O’Callaghan, and they’ll be both lost.’ ‘ No,’ exclaimed others; ‘ if it’s in the power of man to save her, *he* will ! ’ ‘ O, blessed father, she’s lost ! ’ now burst from all present; for, after having struggled and been kept floating for some time by her garments, she at length sunk, apparently exhausted and senseless, and the thief of a flood flowed over her, as if she had not been under its surface.

“ When O’Callaghan saw that she went down, he raised himself up in the water, and cast his eye towards that part of the bank opposite which she disappeared, evidently, as it proved, that he might have a mark to guide him in fixing on the proper spot where to plunge after her. When he came to the place, he raised himself again in the stream, and, calculating that she must by this time have been borne some distance from the spot where she sank, he gave a stroke or two down the river, and disappeared after her. This was followed by another cry of horror and despair, for, somehow, the idea of desolation which marks, at all times, a deep, over-swollen torrent, heightened by the bleak mountain scenery around them, and the dark, angry voracity of the river where they had sunk, might have impressed the spectators with utter hopelessness as to the fate of those now engulfed in its vortex. This, however, I leave to those who are deeper read in philosophy than I am.

“ An awful silence succeeded the last shrill exclamation, broken only by the hoarse rushing of the waters, whose wild, continuous roar, booming hollowly and dismally in the ear, might be heard at a great distance over all the country. But a new sensation soon invaded the multitude; for after the lapse of about half a minute, John O’Callaghan emerged from the flood, bearing in his sinister hand, the body of *his own* Rose Galh—for it’s he that loved her tenderly. A peal of joy congratulated them from the assembled crowd; hundreds of directions were given to him how to act to the best advantage. Two young men in especial, who were both dying about the lovely creature that he held, were quite anxious to give advice.

“ ‘ Bring her to the other side, John, ma bouchal; it’s the safest,’ said Larry Carty.

“ ‘ Will you let him alone, Carty ? ’ said Simon Tracy, who was the other, ‘ you’ll only put him in a perplexity.’

“ But Carty should order in spite of every thing. He kept bawling out, however, so loud, that John raised his eye to see what he meant, and was near losing hold of Rose. This was too much for Tracy, who ups with his fist, and downs him—so they both at it; for no one there could take themselves off those that were in danger, to interfere between

them. But at all events, no earthly thing can happen among Irishmen without a fight.

“The father, during this, stood breathless, his hands clasped, and his eyes turned to heaven, praying in anguish for the delivery of his darling. The mother’s look was still wild and fixed, her eyes glazed, and her muscles hard and stiff; evidently she was insensible to all that was going forward; while large drops of paralytic agony hung upon her cold brow. Neither of the sisters had yet recovered, nor could those who supported them turn their eyes from the more imminent danger, to pay them any particular attention. Many, also, of the other females, whose feelings were too much wound up when the accident occurred, now fainted, when they saw she was likely to be rescued; but most of them were weeping with delight and gratitude.

“When John brought her to the surface, he paused a moment to recover breath and collectedness; he then caught her by the left arm, near the shoulder, and cut, in a slanting direction, down the stream, to a watering-place, where a slope had been formed in the bank. But he was already too far down to be able to work across the stream to this point; for it was here much stronger and more rapid than under the planks. Instead, therefore, of reaching the slope, he found himself, in spite of every effort to the contrary, about a perch below it; and except he could gain this point, against the strong rush of the flood, there was very little hope of being able to save either her or himself—for he was now much exhausted.

“Hitherto, therefore, all was still doubtful, whilst strength was fast failing him. In this trying and almost hopeless situation, with an admirable presence of mind, he adopted the only expedient which could possibly enable him to reach the bank. On finding himself receding down, instead of advancing up the current, he approached the bank, which was here very deep and perpendicular; he then sank his fingers into and pressed his right foot against the firm blue clay with which it was stratified, and by this means advanced, bit by bit, up the stream, having no other force by which to propel himself against it. After this mode did he breast the current with all his strength—which must have been prodigious, or he never could have borne it out—until he reached the slope, and got from the influence of the tide, into dead water. On arriving here, his hand was caught by one of the young men present, who stood up to the neck, waiting his approach. A second man stood behind him, holding his other hand, a link being thus formed, that reached out to the firm bank; and a good pull now brought them both to the edge of the river. On finding bottom, John took his Colleen Galh in his own arms, carried her out, and pressing his lips to hers, laid her in the bosom of her father; then, after taking another kiss of the young drowned flower, he burst into tears, and fell powerless beside her. The truth is, the spirit that had kept him firm was now exhausted; both his legs and arms having become nerveless by the exertion.

“Hitherto her father took no notice of John, for how could he? seeing that he was entirely wrapped up in his daughter; and the question was, though rescued from the flood, if life was in her. The sisters were by this time recovered, and weeping over her, along with the father—and, indeed,

with all present ; but the mother could not be made to comprehend what they were about, at all, at all. The country people used every means with which they were intimate, to recover Rose ; she was brought instantly to a farmer's house beside the spot, put into a warm bed, covered over with hot salt, wrapped in half-scorched blankets, and made subject to every other mode of treatment that could possibly revoke the functions of life. John had now got a decent draught of whiskey, which revived him. He stood over her, when he could be admitted, watching for the symptomatics of her revival ; all, however, was vain. He now determined to try another course : by-and-by he stooped, put his mouth to her mouth, and, drawing in his breath, respired with all his force from the bottom of his very heart into hers ; this he did several times rapidly—faith, a tender and agreeable operation, any how. But mark the consequence : in less than a minute her white bosom heaved—her breath returned—her pulse began to play—she opened her eyes, and felt his tears of love raining warmly on her pale cheek !

“ For years before this, no two of these opposite factions had spoken, nor up to this minute had John and they, even upon this occasion, exchanged a monosyllable. The father now looked at him—the tears stood afresh in his eyes ; he came forward—stretched out his hand—it was received ; and the next moment he fell upon John's neck, and cried like an infant.

“ When Rose recovered, she seemed as if striving to recordate what had happened ; and, after two or three minutes, inquired from her sister, in a weak but sweet voice, ‘ Who saved me ? ’

“ ‘ Twas John O'Callaghan, Rose darling, ’ replied the sister, in tears, ‘ that ventured his own life into the boiling flood, to save yours—and did save it, jewel ! ’

“ Rose's eye glanced at John—and I only wish, as I am a bachelor not further than my forty-fourth, that I may ever have the happiness to get such a glance from two blue eyes, as she gave him that moment—a faint smile played about her mouth, and a slight blush lit up her fair cheek, like the evening sunbeams on the virgin snow, as the poets have said for the five-hundredth time, to my own personal knowledge. She then extended her hand, which John, you may be sure, was no way backward in receiving, and the tears of love and gratitude ran silently down her cheeks.

“ It is not necessary to detail the circumstances of this day farther ; let it be sufficient to say, that a reconciliation took place between those two branches of the O'Hallaghan and O'Callaghan families, in consequence of John's heroism and Rose's soft persuasion, and that there was, also, every perspective of the two factions being penultimately amalgamated. For nearly a century they had been pell-mell at it, whenever and wherever they could meet. Their forefathers, who had been engaged in the lawsuit about the island which I have mentioned, were dead and petrified in their graves ; and the little peninsula in the glen was gradationally worn away by the river, till nothing remained but a desert, upon a small scale, of sand and gravel. Even the ruddy, able-bodied Squire, with the longitudinal nose, projecting out of his face like a broken arch, and the

small, fiery magistrate—both of whom had fought the duel, for the purpose of setting forth a good example, and bringing the dispute to a *peaceable* conclusion—were also dead. The very memory of the original contention had been lost (except that it was preserved along with the cranium of my grandfather), or became so indistinct that the parties fastened themselves on some more modern provocation, which they kept in view until another fresh motive would start up, and so on. I know not, however, whether it was fair to expect them to give up at once the agreeable recreation of fighting. It's not easy to abolish old customs, particularly diversions; and every one knows that this is our national amusement.

“There were, it is true, many among both factions who saw the matter in this reasonable light, and who wished rather, if it were to cease, that it should die away by degrees, from the battle of the whole parish, equally divided between the factions, to the subordinate row between certain members of them—from that to the faint broil of certain families, and so on to the single-handed play between individuals. At all events, one-half of them were for peace, and two-thirds of them equally divided between peace and war.

“For three months after the accident which befel Rose Galh O'Hallaghan, both factions had been tolerantly quiet—that is to say, they had no general engagement. Some slight skirmishes certainly did take place on market-nights, when the drop was in, and the spirits up; but in those neither John nor Rose's immediate families took any part. The fact was that John and Rose were on the evening of matrimony; the match had been made—the day appointed, and every other necessary stipulation ratified. Now, John was as fine a young man as you would meet in a day's travelling; and as for Rose her name went far and near for beauty: and with justice, for the sun never shone on a fairer, meeker, or modester virgin than Rose Galh O'Hallaghan.

“It might be, indeed, that there were those on both sides who thought that, if the marriage was obstructed, their own sons and daughters would have a better chance. Rose had many admirers: they might have envied John his happiness; many fathers, on the other side, might have wished their sons to succeed with Rose. Whether I am sinister in this conjecture is more than I can say. I grant, indeed, that a great portion of it is speculation on my part. The wedding-day, however, was arranged; but, unfortunately, the fair-day of Knockimdowney occurred, in the rotation of natural time, precisely one week before it. I know not from what motive it proceeded, but the factions on both sides were never known to make a more light-hearted preparation for battle. Cudgels of all sorts and sizes (and some of them, to my own knowledge, great beauties) were provided.

“I believe I may as well take this opportunity of saying that real Irish cudgels must be root-growing, either oak, black-thorn, or crab-tree—although crab-tree, by the way, is apt to fly. They should not be too long—three feet and a few inches is an accommodating length. They must be naturally top-heavy, and have around the end that is to make acquaintance with the cranium three or four natural lumps, calculated to

divide the flesh in the natest manner, and to leave, if possible, the smallest taste in life of pit in the skull. But if a good root-growing *kippeen* be light at the fighting-end, or possess not the proper number of knobs, a hole, a few inches deep, is to be bored in the end, which must be filled with melted lead. This gives it a widow-and-orphan-making quality, a child-bereaving touch, altogether very desirable. If, however, the top splits in the boring—which, in awkward hands, is not uncommon—the defect may be remediated by putting on an iron ferrule, and driving two or three strong nails into it, simply to preserve it from flying off; not that an Irishman is ever at a loss for weapons when in a fight, for so long as a scythe, flail, spade, pitchfork, or stone is at hand, he feels quite contented with the lot of war. No man, as they say of great statesmen, is more fertile in expedients during a row; which, by the way, I take to be a good quality, at all events.

“I remember the fair-day of Knockimdowney well: it has kept me from griddle-bread and tough nutriment ever since. Hard fortune to Jack Roe O’Hallaghan! No man had better teeth than I had till I met with him that day. He fought stoutly on his own side; but he was *ped* then for the same basting that fell to me, though not by my hands, if to get his jaw dacently divided into three halves could be called a fair liquidation of an old debt—it was equal to twenty shillings in the pound, any how.

“There had not been a larger fair in the town of Knockimdowney for years. The day was dark and sunless, but sultry. On looking through the crowd, I could see no man without a cudgel; yet, what was strange, there was no certainty of any sport. Several desultory skrimmages had locality, but they were altogether sequestered from the great factions of the O’s. Except that it was pleasant, and stirred one’s blood to look at them, or occasioned the cudgels to be grasped more firmly, there was no personal interest felt by any of us in them; they therefore began and ended, here and there, through the fair, like mere flashes in the pan, dying in their own smoke.

“The blood of every prolific nation is naturally hot; but when that hot blood is inflamed by ardent spirits, it is not to be supposed that men should be cool; and, God he knows, there is not on the level surface of this habitable globe, a nation that has been so thoroughly inflamed by *ardent spirits* of all kinds as Ireland.

“Up till four o’clock that day, the factions were quiet. Several relations on both sides had been invited to drink by John and Rose’s families, for the purpose of establishing a good feeling between them. But this was, after all, hardly to be expected, for they hated one another with an ardency much too good-humoured and buoyant; and, between ourselves, to bring Paddy over a bottle is a very equivocal mode of giving him an anti-cudgelling disposition. After the hour of four, several of the factions were getting very friendly, which I knew at the time to be a bad sign. Many of them nodded to each other, which I knew to be a worse one; and some of them shook hands with the greatest cordiality, which I no sooner saw than I slipped the knot of my cravat, and held myself in preparation for the sport.

“I have often had occasion to remark—and few men, let me tell you, had finer opportunities of doing so—the differential symptomatics between a Party Fight, that is, a battle between Orangemen and Ribbonmen, and one between two Roman Catholic Factions. There is something infinitely more anxious, silent, and deadly, in the compressed vengeance, and the hope of slaughter, which characterise a *party fight*, than is to be seen in a battle between *factions*. The truth is, the enmity is not so deep and well-grounded in the latter as in the former. The feeling is not political nor religious between the factions; whereas, in the other, it is both, which is a mighty great advantage; for when this is adjuncted to an intense personal hatred, and a sense of wrong, probably arising from a too intimate recollection of the leaded black-thorn, or the awkward death of some relative, by the musket or the bayonet, it is apt to produce very party fighting, and much respectable retribution.

“In a party fight, a prophetic sense of danger hangs, as it were, over the crowd—the very air is loaded with apprehension; and the vengeance burst is proceeded by a close, thick darkness, almost sulphury, that is more terrifical than the conflict itself, though clearly less dangerous and fatal. The scowl of the opposing parties, the blanched cheeks, the knit brows, and the grinding teeth, not premitting the deadly gleams that shoot from their kindled eyes, are ornaments which a plain battle between factions cannot boast, but which, notwithstanding, are very suitable to the fierce and gloomy silence of that premeditated vengeance which burns with such intensity in the heart, and scorches up the vitals into such a thirst for blood. Not but that they come by different means to the same conclusion; because it is the feeling, and not altogether the manner of operation, that is different.

“Now a faction fight doesn't resemble this, at all, at all. Paddy's at home here; all song, dance, good-humour, and affection. His cheek is flushed with delight, which, indeed, may derive assistance from the consciousness of having no bayonets or loaded carabines to contend with—but, any how, he's at home—his eye is lit with real glee—he tosses his hat in the air, in the height of mirth—and leaps, like a mountebank, two yards from the ground. Then, with what a gracious dexterity he brandishes his cudgel! what a joyous spirit is heard in his shout at the face of a friend from another faction! His very 'who!' is contagious, and would make a man, that had settled on running away, return and join the sport with an appetite truly Irish. He is, in fact, while under the influence of this heavenly *afflatus*, in love with every one, man, woman, and child. If he meet his sweetheart, he will give her a kiss and a hug, and that with double kindness, because he is on his way to thrash her father or brother. It is the *acumen* of his enjoyment; and woe be to him who will adventure to go between him and his amusements. To be sure, skulls and bones are broken, and lives lost; but they are lost in pleasant fighting—they are the consequences of the sport, the beauty of which consists in breaking as many heads and necks as you can; and certainly when a man enters into the spirit of any exercise, there is nothing like elevating himself to the point of excellence. Then a man ought never to be disheartened. If you lose this game, or get your head good-humouredly

beaten to pieces, why you may win another, or your friends may mollify two or three skulls as a set-off to yours ; but that is nothing.

“ When the evening became more advanced, maybe, considering the poor look up there was for anything like decent sport—maybe, in the early part of the day, it wasn't the delightful sight to see the boys on each side of the two great factions, beginning to get frolicksome. Maybe the songs and the shouting, when they began, hadn't melody and music in them, any how! People may talk about harmony; but what harmony is equal to that in which five or six hundred men sing and shout, and leap and caper at each other, as a prelude to neighbourly fighting, where they beat time upon the drums of each other's cars and heads with oak drum-sticks? That's an Irishman's music; and hard fortune to the *garran** that wouldn't have friendship and kindness in him to join and play a *stave* along with them! 'Whoo! your sowl! Hurroo! Success to our side! Hi for the O'Callaghans! Where's the blackguard to—,' I beg pardon, decent reader; I forgot myself for a moment, or rather I got new life in me, for I am nothing at all at all for the last five months—a kind of nonentity I may say, ever since that vagabond Burgess occasioned me to pay a visit to my distant relations, till my friends get that last matter of the collar-bone settled.

“ The impulse which *faction* fighting gives to trade and business in Ireland is truly surprising; whereas *party* fighting depreciates both. As soon as it is perceived that a *party* fight is to be expected, all buying and selling are nearly suspended for the day; and those who are not *up* †, and even many who are, take themselves and their property home as quickly as may be convenient. But in a *faction* fight, as soon as there is any perspective of a row, depend upon it, there is quick work at all kinds of negotiation; and truly there is nothing like brevity and decision in buying and selling; for which reason *faction* fighting, at all events, if only for the sake of national prosperity, should be encouraged and kept up.

“ Towards five o'clock, if a man was placed on an exalted station, so that he could look at the crowd, and *wasn't able to fight*, he could have seen much that a man might envy him for. Here a hat went up, or maybe a dozen of them; then followed a general huzza. On the other side, two dozen *caubeens* sought the sky, like so many scaldy crows attempting their own element for the first time, only they were not so black. Then another shout, which was answered by that of their friends on the opposite side; so that you would hardly know which side huzzaed loudest, the blending of both was so truly symphonious. Now there was a shout for the face of an O'Callaghan: this was prosecuted on the very heels by another for the face of an O'Hallaghan. Immediately a man of the O'Hallaghan side doffed his tattered frieze, and catching it by the very extremity of the sleeve, drew it with a tact, known only by an initiation of half-a-dozen street days, up the pavement after him. On the instant, a blade from the O'Callaghan side *peeled* with equal alacrity,

* *Garran*—A horse; but it is always used as meaning a bad one—one without mettle. When figuratively applied to a man, it means a coward.

† Initiated into Whiteboyism.

and stretching his *homs-made** at full length after him, proceeded triumphantly up the street, to meet the other.

“Thunder-an-ages, what’s this for, at all, at all! I wish I hadn’t begun to manuscript an account of it, any how; ’tis like a hungry man dreaming of a good dinner at a feast, and afterwards awaking and finding his front ribs and back-bone on the point of union. Reader, is that a black-thorn you carry—tut, where is my imagination bound for?—to meet the other, I say.

“Where’s the rascally *O’Callaghan* that will place his toe or his shillely on this frieze?’ ‘Is there no blackguard *O’Hallaghan* jist to look *crucked* at the coat of an *O’Callaghan*, or say black’s the white of his eye?’

“‘Throth and there is, Ned, avourneen, that same on the sod here.’

“‘Is that Barney?’

“‘The same, Ned, ma bouchal; and how is your mother’s son, Ned?’

“‘In good health at the present time, thank God and you; how is yourself, Barney?’



“‘Can’t complain as time goes; only take this, any how, to mend your health, ma bouchal.’ (Whack.)

“‘Success, Barney, and here’s at your sarvice, avick, not making little of what I got, any way.’ (Crack.)

“About five o’clock on a May evening, in the fair of Knockimdowney, was the ice thus broken, with all possible civility, by Ned and Barney. The next moment a general rush took place towards the scene of action, and ere you could bless yourself, Barney and Ned were both down, weltering in their own and each other’s blood. I scarcely know, indeed, though with a mighty respectable quota of experimentality myself, how to describe what followed. For the first twenty minutes the general harmony of this fine row might be set to music, according to a scale something like this:—Whick whack—crick crack—whick whack—crick crack—&c. &c. &c. ‘Here yer sowl—(crack)—there yer sowl—(whack.) Whoo for the *O’Hallaghans*!’—(crack, crack, crack.) ‘Hurroo for the *O’Cal-*

Irish frieze is mostly manufactured at home, which accounts for the expression here.

laghans!—(whack, whack, whack.) The O'Callaghans for ever!—(whack) 'The O'Hallaghans for ever!—(crack.) 'Murther! murther! (crick, crack)—foul! foul!—(whick, whack.) Blood and turf!—(whack, whick)—tunther-an-ouns!—(crack, crick.) 'Hurroo! my darlings! handle your kippeens—(crack, crack)—the O'Hallaghans are going!—(whack, whack.)

"You are to suppose them here to have been at it for about half an hour.

"Whack, crack—'oh—oh—oh! have mercy upon me, boys—(crack—a shriek of murther! murther—crack, crack, whack)—my life—my life—(crack, crack—whack, whack)—oh! for the sake of the living Father!—for the sake of my wife and childher, Ned Hallaghan, spare my life.'

"So we will, but take this, any how!—(whack, crack, whack, crack.)

"Oh! for the love of God don't kill—(whack, crack, whack.) Oh!—(crack, crack, whack—*dies.*)

"Huzza! huzza! huzza!' from the O'Hallaghans. 'Bravo, boys! there's one of them done for: whoo! my darlings! hurroo! the O'Hallaghans for ever!'

"The scene now changes to the O'Callaghan side.

"Jack—oh, Jack, avourneen—hell to their sows for murderers—Paddy's killed—his skull's smashed! Revinge, boys, Paddy O'Callaghan's killed! On with you, O'Callaghans—on with you—on with you, Paddy O'Callaghan's murdered—take to the stones—that's it—keep it up—down with him! Success!—he's the bloody villain that didn't show him marcy—that's it. Tunder-an-ouns, is it laving him that way you are afther—let me at him!

"Here's a stone, Tom!

"No, no, this stick has the lead in it. It'll *do* him, never fear!

"Let him alone, Barney, he's got enough.'

"By the powdher, it's myself that won't: didn't he kill Paddy?—(crack, crack.) Take that, you murdering thief!—(whack, whack.)

"Oh!—(whack, crack)—my head—I'm killed—I'm—(crack—*kicks the bucket.*)

"Now, your sowl, that does you, any way—(crack, whack)—hurroo!—huzza!—huzza!—Man for man, boys—an O'Hallaghan's done for—whoo! for our side—tol-deroll, lol-deroll, tow, row, row—huzza!—huzza!—tol-deroll, lol-deroll, tow, row, row huzza for the O'Callaghans!'

"From this moment the battle became delightful; it was now pelt and welt on both sides, but many of the kippeens were broken; many of the boys had their fighting arms disabled by a dislocation, or bit of fracture, and those weren't equal to more than doing a little upon such as were down.

"In the midst of the din, such a dialogue as this might be heard:

"Larry, you're after being done for, for this day.' (Whack, crack.)

"Only an eye gone—is that Mickey?' (whick, whack, crick, crack.)

"That's it, my darlings!—you may say that, Larry—'tis my mother's son that's in it—(crack, crack, a general huzza:) (Mickey and Larry) huzza! huzza! huzza for the O'Hallaghans! What have you got, Larry?—(crack, crack.)

“ ‘ Only the bone of my arm, God be praised for it, very purtily snapt across !—(whack, whack).

“ ‘ Is that all ? Well, some people have luck !—(crack, crack, crack).

“ ‘ Why I’ve no reason to complain, thank God—(whack, crack !)—purtly play that, any way—Paddy O’Callaghan’s settled—did you hear it ?—(whack, whack, another shout)—That’s it, boys—handle the shilleleleys !—Success O’Hallaghans—down with the bloody O’Callaghans !’

“ ‘ I did hear it : so is Jem O’Hallaghan—(crack, whack, whack, crack)—you’re not able to get up, I see—tare-an-ouny, isn’t it a pleasure to hear that play ?—What ails you ?’

“ ‘ Oh, Larry, I’m in great pain, and getting very weak, entirely’—(*faints*).

“ ‘ Faix, and he’s settled too, I’m thinking.’

“ ‘ Oh, murdher, my arm !’ (One of the O’Callaghans attacks him—crack, crack)——

“ ‘ Take that, you bagabone !—(whack, whack).

“ ‘ Murdher, murdher, is it strikin a *down* man you’re after ?—foul, foul, and my arm broke !—(crack, crack).

“ ‘ Take that, with what you got before, and it’ll ase you, maybe.’

“ (A party of the O’Hallaghans attack the man who is beating him).

“ ‘ Murdher, murdher !—(crack, whack, whack, crack, crack, whack).

“ ‘ Lay on him, your sowls to pirdition—lay on him, hot and heavy—give it to him ! He sthruke me and me down wid my broken arm !’

“ ‘ Foul, ye thieves of the world !—(from the O’Callaghan)—foul ! five against one—give me fair play !—(crack, crack, crack)—Oh !—(whack)—Oh, oh, oh !—(falls senseless, covered with blood).

“ ‘ Ha, hell’s cure to you, you bloody thief ; you didn’t spare me with my arm broke.’—(Another general shout). ‘ Bad end to it, isn’t it a poor case entirely, that I can’t even throw up my caubeen, let alone join in the divarsion.’

“ Both parties now rallied, and ranged themselves along the street, exhibiting a firm compact phalanx, wedged close against each other, almost foot to foot. The mass was thick and dense, and the tug of conflict stiff, wild, and savage. Much natural skill and dexterity were displayed in their mutual efforts to preserve their respective ranks unbroken, and as the sallies and charges were made on both sides, the temporary rush, the indentation of the multitudinous body, and the rebound into its original position, gave an undulating appearance to the compact mass—reeking, dragging, groaning, and huzzaing as it was, that resembled the serpentine motion of a rushing water-spout in the clouds.

“ The women now began to take part with their brothers and sweet-hearts. Those who had no bachelors among the opposite factions, fought along with their brothers ; others did not scruple even to assist in giving their enamoured swains the father of a good beating. Many, however, were more faithful to love than to natural affection, and these sallied out, like heroines, under the banners of their sweethearts, fighting with amazing prowess against their friends and relations ; nor was it at all extraordinary to see two sisters engaged on opposite sides—perhaps tearing each other as, with dishevelled hair, they screamed with a fury that was

truly exemplary. Indeed it is no untruth to assert that the women do much valuable execution. Their manner of fighting is this—as soon as the fair one decides upon taking a part in the row, she instantly takes off her apron or her stocking, stoops down, and lifting the first four pounder she can get, puts it in the corner of her apron, or the foot of her stocking, if it has a foot, and marching into the scene of action, lays about her right and left. Upon my credibility, they are extremely useful and handy, and can give mighty nate knockdowns—inasmuch as no guard that a man is acquainted with can ward off their blows. Nay, what is more, it often happens, when a son-in-law is in a faction against his father-in-law and his wife's people generally, that if he and his wife's brother meet, the wife will clink him with the *pet* in her apron, downing her own husband with great skill, for it is not always that marriage extinguishes the hatred of factions; and very often 'tis the brother that is humiliated.

“Up to the death of these two men, John O'Callaghan and Rose's father, together with a large party of their friends on both sides, were drinking in a public-house, determined to take no portion in the fight, at all, at all. Poor Rose, when she heard the shouting and terrible strokes, got as pale as death, and sat close to John, whose hand she captured in hers, beseeching him, and looking up in his face with the most imploring sincerity as she spoke, not to go out among them; the tears falling all the time from her fine eyes, the mellow flashes of which, when John's pleasantries in soothing her would seduce a smile, went into his very heart. But when, on looking out of the window where they sat, two of the opposing factions heard that a man on each side was killed; and when on ascertaining the names of the individuals, and of those who murdered them, it turned out that one of the murdered men was brother to a person in the room, and his murderer uncle to one of those in the window, it was not in the power of man or woman to keep them asunder, particularly as they were all rather advanced in liquor. In an instant the friends of the murdered man made a rush at the window, before any pacifiers had time to get between them, and catching the nephew of him who had committed the murder, hurled him head-foremost upon the stone pavement, where his skull was dashed to pieces, and his brains scattered about the flags!

“A general attack instantly took place in the room, between the two factions; but the apartment was too low and crowded to permit of proper fighting, so they rushed out to the street, shouting and yelling, as they do when the battle comes to the *real* point of doing business. As soon as it was seen that the heads of the O'Callaghans and O'Hallaghans were at work as well as the rest, the fight was re-commenced with redoubled spirit; but when the mutilated body of the man who had been flung from the window, was observed lying in a pool of his own proper brains and blood, such a cry arose among his friends, as would *cake** the vital fluid in the veins of any one not a party in the quarrel. Now was the work—the moment of interest—men and women groaning, staggering, and lying insensible; others shouting, leaping, and huzzaing; some singing, and not a few able-bodied spalpeens blurting, like overgrown

* Harden.

children, on seeing their own blood; many raging and roaring about like bulls;—all this formed such a group as a faction fight, and nothing else, could represent.

“The battle now blazed out afresh; and all kinds of instruments were pressed into the service. Some got flails, some spades, some shovels, and one man got his hands upon a scythe, with which, unquestionably, he would have taken more lives than one; but, very fortunately, as he sallied out to join the crowd, he was politely visited in the back of the head by a brick-bat, which had a mighty convincing way with it of giving him a peaceable disposition, for he instantly lay down, and did not seem at all anxious as to the result of the battle. The O’Hallaghans were now compelled to give way, owing principally to the introvention of John O’Callaghan, who, although he was as good as sworn to take no part in the contest, was compelled to fight merely to protect himself. But, blood-and-turf! when he *did* begin, he was dreadful. As soon as his party saw him engaged, they took fresh courage, and in a short time made the O’Hallaghans retreat up the church-yard. I never saw any thing equal to John; he absolutely sent them down in dozens: and when a man would give him any inconvenience with the stick, he would *down* him with the fist, for right and left were all alike to him. Poor Rose’s brother and he met, both roused like two lions; but when John saw who it was, he held back his hand:—

“‘No, Tom,’ says he, ‘I’ll not strike *you*, for Rose’s sake. I’m not fighting through ill will to you or your family; so take another direction, for I can’t strike you.’

“The blood, however, was unfortunately up in Tom.

“‘We’ll decide it now,’ said he. ‘I’m as good a man as you, O’Callaghan; and let me whisper this in your ear—you’ll never warm the one bed with Rose, while’s God’s in heaven—it’s past that now—there can be nothing but blood between us!’

“At this juncture two of the O’Callaghans ran with their shillelaghs up, to beat down Tom on the spot.

“‘Stop, boys!’ said John, ‘you musn’t touch him; he had no hand in the quarrel. Go, boys, if you respect me; lave him to myself.’

“The boys withdrew to another part of the fight; and the next instant Tom struck the very man that interfered to save him, across the temple, and cut him severely. John put his hand up and staggered.

“‘I’m sorry for this,’ he observed; ‘but it’s now self-defence with me;’ and, at the same moment, with one blow, he left Tom O’Hallaghan stretched insensible on the street.

“On the O’Hallaghans being driven to the church-yard, they were at a mighty great inconvenience for weapons. Most of them had lost their sticks it being a usage in fights of this kind, to twist the cudgels from the grasp of the beaten men, to prevent them from rallying. They soon, however, furnished themselves with the best they could find, videlicet, the skull, leg, thigh, and arm bones, which they found lying about the grave-yard. This was a new species of weapon, for which the majority of the O’Callaghans were scarcely prepared. Out they sallied in a body—some with these, others with stones, and, making fierce assault upon their enemies,





Neal Malone, *Journalist*, at the Miller

1864

absolutely *drive* them back—not so much by the damage they were doing, as by the alarm and terror which these unexpected species of missiles excited.

“At this moment, notwithstanding the fatality that had taken place, nothing could be more truly comical and facetious than the appearance of the field of battle. Skulls were flying in every direction—so thick, indeed, that it might with truth be asseverated, that many who were petrified in the dust, had their skulls broken in this great battle between the factions.—God help poor Ireland! when its inhabitants are so pugnacious, that even the grave is no security against getting their crowns cracked, and their bones fractured! Well, any how, skulls and bones flew in every direction; stones and brick-bats were also put in motion; spades, shovels, loaded whips, pot-sticks, churn-staffs, flails, and all kinds of available weapons were in hot employment.

“But, perhaps, there was nothing more truly felicitous or original in its way than the mode of warfare adopted by little Neal Malone, who was tailor for the O’Callaghan side: for every tradesman is obliged to fight on behalf of his own faction. Big Frank Farrell, the miller, being on the O’Hallaghan side, had been sent for, and came up from his mill behind the town, quite fresh. He was never what could be called a *good man**, though it was said that he could lift ten hundredweight. He puffed forward with a great cudgel, determined to commit slaughter out of the face, and the first man he met was the *weeshy* fraction of a tailor, as nimble as a hare. He immediately attacked him, and would probably have taken his measure for life had not the tailor’s activity protected him. Farrell was in a rage, and Neal, taking advantage of his blind fury, slipt round him, and, with a short run, sprung upon the miller’s back, and planted a foot upon the threshold of each coat pocket, holding by the mealy collar of his waistcoat. In this position he belaboured the miller’s face and eyes with his little hard fist to such purpose, that he had him in the course of a few minutes nearly as blind as a mill-horse. The miller roared for assistance, but the pell-mell was going on too warmly for his cries to be available. In fact, he resembled an elephant with a monkey on his back.

“‘How do you like that, Farrell?’ Neal would say, giving him a cuff—‘and that, and that; but that is best of all. Take it again, gudgeon (two cuffs more)—here’s grist for you (half a dozen additional)—hard fortune to you! (crack, crack.) What! going to lie down!—by all that’s terrible, if you do, I’ll *annigulate* † you! Here’s a *dhuragh* ‡, (another half dozen)—long measure, you savage!—the baker’s dozen, you baste!—there’s five-an’-twenty to the score, Sampson! and one or two in’ (crack, whack).

* A brave man. He was a man of huge size and prodigious strength, and died in consequence of an injury he received in lifting one of the cathedral bells of Clogher, which is said to be ten hundredweight.

† Annihilate. Many of the jawbreakers—and this was one in a double sense—used by the hedge-schoolmasters, are scattered among the people, by whom they are so twisted that it would be extremely difficult to recognise them.

‡ Dhuragh—An additional portion of anything thrown in from a spirit of generosity, after the measure agreed on is given. When the miller, for instance, receives his toll, the country-people usually throw in several handfuls of meal as a *Dhuragh*.

“ ‘ Oh ! murther sheery ! ’ shouted the miller. ‘ Murther-an-age, I’m kilt ! Foul play !—foul play ! ’

“ ‘ You lie, big Nebuchodonosor ! it’s not—this is all *fair* play, you big baste ! *Fair* play, Sampson !—by the same a-token, here’s to jog your memory that it’s the *Fair* day of Knockimdowney ! *Irish Fair* play, you whale ! But I’ll whale you’ (crack, crack, whack).

“ ‘ Oh ! oh ! ’ shouted the miller.

“ ‘ Oh ! oh ! is it ? Oh, if I had my scissors here till I’d clip your ears off—wouldn’t I be the happy man, any how, you swab, you ? ’ (whack, whack, crack.)

“ ‘ Murther ! murther ! murther ! ’ shouted the miller. ‘ Is there no help ? ’

“ ‘ Help, is it ?—you may say that (crack crack) : there’s a trifle—a small taste in the *milling* style, you know ; and here goes to dislodge a *grinder*. Did ye ever hear of the tailor on horseback, Sampson ? eh ? (whack, whack.) Did you ever expect to see a tailor o’ horseback of yourself, you baste ? (crack.) I tell you, if you offer to lie down, I’ll *annigulate* you out o’ the face.’

“ Never, indeed, was a miller before or since so well dusted ; and, I dare say, Neal would have rode him long enough, but for an O’Hallaghan, who had gone into one of the houses to procure a weapon. This man was nearly as original in his choice of one as the tailor in the position which he selected for beating the miller. On entering the kitchen, he found that he had been anticipated : there was neither tongs, poker, nor churn-staff, nor, in fact, anything wherewith he could assault his enemies : all had been carried off by others. There was, however, a goose, in the action of being roasted on a spit at the fire : this was enough ; Honest O’Hallaghan saw nothing but the spit, which he accordingly seized, goose and all, making the best of his way, so armed, to the scene of battle. He just came out of an entry as the miller was once more roaring for assistance, and, to a dead certainty, would have spitted the tailor like a cock-sparrow against the miller’s carcase, had not his activity once more saved him. Unluckily, the unfortunate miller got the thrust behind which was intended for Neal, and roared like a bull. He was beginning to shout ‘ Foul play ! ’ again, when, on turning round, he perceived that the thrust had not been intended for him, but for the tailor.

“ ‘ Give me that spit,’ said he ; ‘ by all the mills that ever were turned, I’ll spit the tailor this blessed minute beside the goose, and we’ll roast them both together.’

“ The other refused to part with the spit ; but the miller, seizing the goose, flung it with all his force after the tailor, who stooped, however, and avoided the blow.

“ ‘ No man has a better right to the goose than the tailor,’ said Neal, as he took it up, and, disappearing, neither he nor the goose could be seen for the remainder of the day.

“ The battle was now somewhat abated. Skulls, and bones, and bricks, and stones, were, however, still flying ; so that it might be truly said, the bones of contention were numerous. The streets presented a woeful spectacle : men were lying with their bones broken—others, though not so seriously injured, lapped in their blood—some were





Rose Carl revenging her Lovers death

The Eastern Post, 11th Dec 1871

crawling up, but were instantly knocked down by their enemies—some were leaning against the walls, or groping their way silently along them, endeavouring to escape observation, lest they might be smashed down and altogether murdered. Wives were sitting with the bloody heads of their husbands in their laps, tearing their hair, weeping, and cursing, in all the gall of wrath, those who left them in such a state. Daughters performed the said offices to their fathers, and sisters to their brothers; not pretermittting those who did not neglect their broken-pated bachelors to whom they paid equal attention. Yet was the scene not without abundance of mirth. Many a hat was thrown up by the O'Callaghan side, who certainly gained the day. Many a song was raised by those who tottered about with trickling sconces, half drunk with whiskey, and half stupid with beating. Many a 'whoo,' and 'hurroo,' and 'huzza,' was sent forth by the triumphanters; but truth to tell, they were miserably feeble and faint, compared to what they had been in the beginning of the amusement; sufficiently evincing that, although they might boast of the name of victory, they had got a bellyful of beating; still there was hard fighting.

"I mentioned, some time ago, that a man had adopted a scythe. I wish from my heart there had been no such bloody instrument there that day; but truth must be told. John O'Callaghan was now engaged against a set of the other O's, who had rallied for the third time, and attacked him and his party. Another brother of Rose Galh's was in this engagement, and him did John O'Callaghan not only knock down, but cut desperately across the temple. A man, stripped, and covered with blood and dust, at that moment made his appearance, his hand bearing the blade of the aforesaid scythe. His approach was at once furious and rapid, and I may as well add, fatal; for before John O'Callaghan had time to be forewarned of his danger, he was cut down, the artery of his neck laid open, and he died without a groan. It was truly dreadful, even to the oldest fighter present, to see the strong rush of red blood that curvated about his neck, until it gurgled, gurgled, gurgled, and lapped, and bubbled out, ending in small red spouts, blackening and blackening, as they became fainter and more faint. At this criticality, every eye was turned from the corpse to the murderer; but *he* had been instantly struck down, and a female, with a large stone in her apron, stood over him, her arms stretched out, her face horribly distorted with agony, and her eyes turned backwards, as it were, into her head. In a few seconds she fell into strong convulsions, and was immediately taken away. Alas! alas! it was Rose Galh; and when we looked at the man she had struck down, he was found to be her brother! flesh of her flesh, and blood of her blood! On examining him more closely, we discovered that his under-jaw hung loose, that his limbs were supple; we tried to make him speak, but in vain—he too was a corpse.

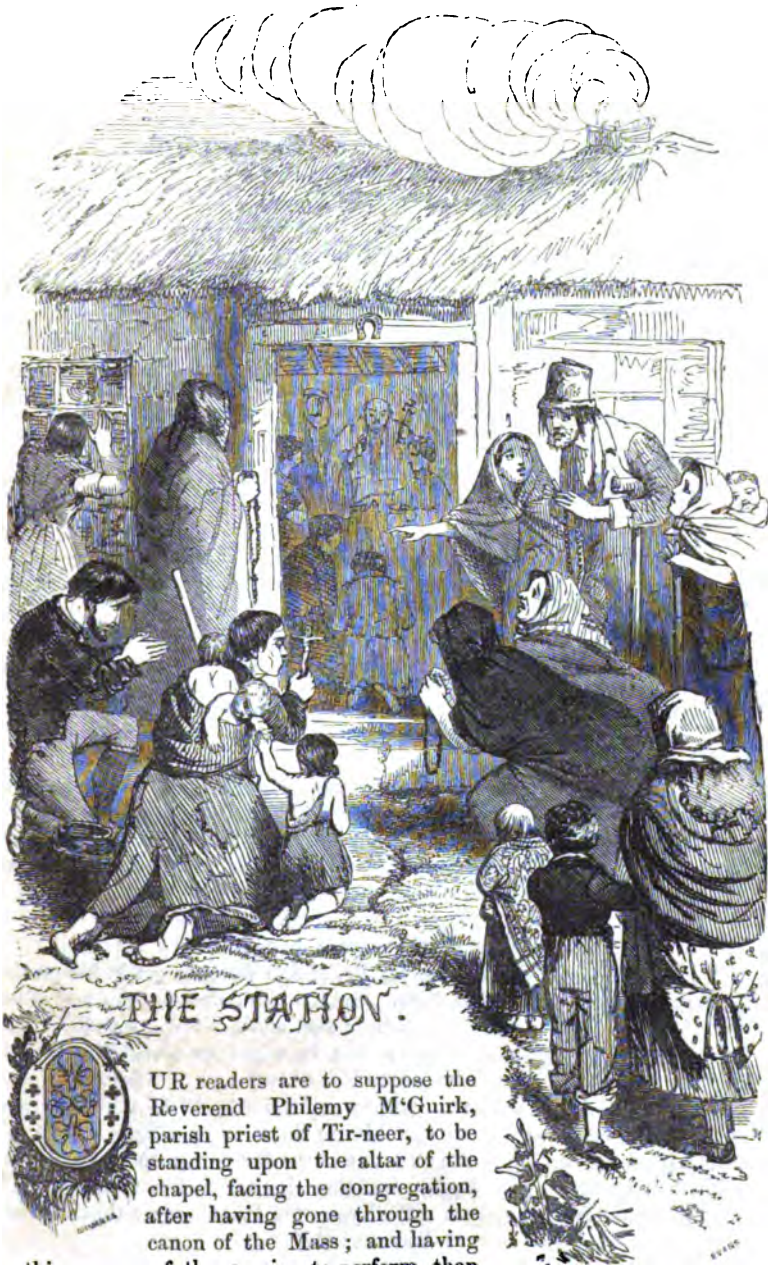
The fact was, that in consequence of his being stripped, and covered by so much blood and dust, she knew him not; and, impelled by her feelings to avenge herself on the murderer of her lover, to whom she doubly owed her life, she struck him a deadly blow, without knowing him to be her brother. The shock produced by seeing her lover murdered, and the

horror of finding that she herself, in avenging him, had taken her brother's life, was too much for a heart so tender as hers. On recovering from her convulsions, her senses were found to be gone for ever! Poor girl! she is still living; but from that moment to this, she has never opened her lips to mortal. She is, indeed, a fair ruin, but silent, melancholy, and beautiful as the moon in the summer heaven. Poor Rose Galh! you and many a mother, and father, and wife, and orphan, have had reason to maledict the *bloody Battles of the Factions*.

"With regard to my grandfather, he says that he didn't see purtier fighting within his own memory; not since the fight between himself and Big Mucklemurray took place in the same town. But, to do him justice, he condemns the scythe and every other weapon except the cudgels; because, he says, that if they continue to be resorted to, nate fighting will be altogether forgotten in the country."

[It was the original intention of the author to have made every man in the humble group about Ned M'Keown's hearth narrate a story illustrating Irish life, feeling, and manners; but on looking into the matter more closely, he had reason to think that such a plan, however agreeable for a time, would ultimately narrow the sphere of his work, and perhaps fatigue the reader by a superfluity of Irish dialogue and its peculiarities of phraseology. He resolved therefore, at the close of the *Battle of the Factions*, to abandon his original design, and leave himself more room for description and observation.]





THE STATION.

OUR readers are to suppose the Reverend Philemy M'Guirk, parish priest of Tir-neer, to be standing upon the altar of the chapel, facing the congregation, after having gone through the canon of the Mass; and having nothing more of the service to perform, than the usual prayers with which he closes the ceremony.

“Take notice, that the Stations for the following week will be held as follows:—

"On Monday, in Jack Gallagher's, of Corraghnamoddagh. Are you there, Jack?"

"To the fore, yer Reverence."

"Why, then, Jack, there's something ominous—something auspicious—to happen, or we wouldn't have you here; for it's very seldom that you make part or parcel of this *present* congregation; seldom are you here, Jack, it must be confessed: however, you know the old classical proverb, or if *you* don't, *I* do, which will just answer as well—*Non semper ridet Apollo*—it's not every day *Manus* kills a bullock; so, as you *are* here, be prepared for us on Monday."

"Never fear, yer Reverence, never fear; I think you ought to know that the grazin' at Corraghnamoddagh's not bad."

"To do you justice, Jack, the mutton was always good with you, only if you would get it better killed it would be an improvement. Get Tom McCusker to kill it, an then it'll have the right smack."

"Very well, yer Rev'ence, I'll do it."

"On Tuesday, in Peter Muriagh's of the Crooked Commons. Are you there, Peter?"

"Here, yer Reverence."

"Indeed, Peter, I might know you are here; and I wish that a great many of *my* flock would take example by you: if they did, I wouldn't be so far behind in getting in my *ducs*. Well, Peter, I suppose you know that this is Michaelmas*?"

"So fat, yer Reverence, that they're not able to wag; but, any way, Katty has them marked for you—two fine young crathurs, only this year's fowl, and the ducks isn't a taste behind them—she's crammin' them this month past."

"I believe you, Peter, and I would take your word for more than the condition of the geese. Remember me to Katty, Peter."

"On Wednesday, in Parrah More Slevin's, of Mullaghfadh. Are you there, Parrah More?"—No answer. "Parrah More Slevin?"—Silence. "Parrah More Slevin, of Mullaghfadh?"—No reply. "Dan Fagan?"

"Present, Sir."

"Do you know what keeps that reprobate from mass?"

"I bleeve he's takin' advantage, Sir, of the frost, to get in his praties to-day, in respect of the bad footin', Sir, for the horses in the bog when there's not a frost. Any how, betune that and a bit of a sore head that he got, yer Reverence, on Thursday last in takin' part wid the O'Scallaghans agin the Bradys, I bleeve he had to stay away to-day."

"On the Sabbath day, too, without my leave! Well, tell him from me, that I'll make an example of him to the whole parish, if he doesn't attend mass better. Will the Bradys and the O'Scallaghans never be done with their quarrelling? I protest, if they don't live like Christians, I'll read them out from the altar. Will you tell Parrah More that I'll hold a station in his house on next Wednesday?"

"I will, Sir; I will, yer Reverence."

"On Thursday, in Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy's of the Esker. Are you there, Phaddhy?"

* Michaelmas is here jocularly alluded to as that period of the year when geese are fattest.

"Wid the help of God, I'm here, Sir."

"Well, Phaddhy, how is yer son Briney, that's at the Latin? I hope he's coming on well at it."

"Why, Sir, he's not more nor a year and a half at it yet, and he's got more books amost nor he can carry; he'll break me buying books for him."

"Well, that's a good sign, Phaddhy; but why don't you bring him to me till I examine him?"

"Why, never a one of me can get him to come, Sir, he's so much afeard of yer Reverence."

"Well, Phaddhy, we were once modest and bashful ourselves, and I'm glad to hear that he's afraid of his *clergy*; but let him be prepared for me on Thursday, and maybe I'll let him know something he never heard before; I'll open his eyes for him."

"Do you hear that, Briney?" said the father, aside to the son, who knelt at his knee; "you must give up yer hurling and idling now, you see. Thank yer Reverence; thank you, docthor."

"On Friday, in Barny O'Darby's, alias Barny Butter's. Are you there, Barny?"

"All that's left of me is here, Sir."

"Well, Barny, how is the butter trade this season?"

"It's a little on the rise, now, Sir: in a month or so I'm expecting it will be brisk enough; *Boney*, Sir, is doing that much for us any way."

"Ay, and, Barny, he'll do more than that for us: God prosper *him* at all events; I only hope the time's coming, Barny, when every one will be able to eat his own butter, and his own beef, too."

"God send it, Sir."

"Well, Barny, I didn't hear from your brother Ned these two or three months; what has become of him?"

"Ah, yer Reverence, Pentland done him up."

"What! the gauger?"

"He did, the thief; but maybe he'll sup sorrow for it, afore's he's much oulder."

"And who do you think informed, Barny?"

"Oh, I only wish we knew that, Sir."

"I wish I knew it, and if I thought any miscreant here would become an *informer*, I'd make an example of him. Well, Barny, on Friday next: but I suppose Ned has a drop still—eh, Barny?"

"Why, Sir, we'll be apt to have something stronger nor wather, any how."

"Very well, Barny; your family was always a dacent and spirited family, I'll say that for them: but tell me, Barny, did you begin to *dams* the river yet?*" I think the trouts and eels are running by this time."

"The creels are mado, yer Reverence, though we did not set them yet; but on Tuesday night, Sir, wid the help o' God, we'll be ready."

* It is usual among the peasantry to form, about Michaelmas, small artificial cascades, called *dams*, under which they place long, deep, wicker creels, shaped like inverted cones, for the purpose of securing the fish that are now on their return to the large rivers, after having deposited their spawn in the higher and remoter streams. It is surprising what a number of fish, particularly of eels, are caught in this manner—sometimes from one barrel to three in the course of a single night!

"You can *corn* the trouts, Barny, and the eels too; but should you catch nothing, go to Pat Hartigan, Captain Sloethorn's gamekeeper, and, if you tell him it's for me, he'll drag you a batch out of the fishpond."

"Ah! then, your Reverence, it's 'imself that 'ill do that wid a heart an' a half."

Such was the conversation which took place between the Reverend Philemy M'Guirk, and those of his parishioners in whose houses he had appointed to hold a series of Stations, for the week ensuing the Sunday laid in this our account of that hitherto undescribed portion of the Romish discipline.

Now, the reader is to understand, that a station in this sense differs from a station made to any peculiar spot remarkable for local sanctity: There, a station means the performance of a pilgrimage to a certain place, under peculiar circumstances, and the going through a stated number of prayers and other penitential ceremonies, for the purpose of wiping out sin in this life, or of relieving the soul of some relation from the pains of purgatory in the other; here, it simply means the coming of the parish priest and his curate to some house in the townland, on a day publicly announced from the altar for that purpose, on the preceding Sabbath.

This is done to give those who live within the district in which the station is held an opportunity of *coming to their duty*, as frequenting the ordinance of confession is emphatically called. Those who attend confession in this manner once a year, are considered *merely* to have done their duty; it is expected, however, that they should *approach the tribunal** as it is termed, at least twice during that period, that is, at the two great festivals of Christmas and Easter. The observance or omission of this rite among Roman Catholics, establishes, in a great degree, the nature of individual character. The man who frequents his duty will seldom be pronounced a bad man, let his conduct and principles be what they may in other respects; and he who neglects it, is looked upon, by those who attend it, as in a state little short of reprobation.

When the "giving out" of the stations was over, and a few more jests were broken by his Reverence, to which the congregation paid the tribute of a general and uproarious laugh, he turned round, and resumed the performance of the mass, whilst his "flock" began to finger their beads with faces as grave as if nothing of the kind had occurred. When mass was finished, and the holy water sprinkled upon the people, out of a tub carried by the mass-server through the chapel for that purpose, the priest gave them a Latin benediction, and they dispersed.

Now, of the five individuals in whose houses the "stations" were appointed to be held, we will select *Phaddy Sheemus Phaddy* for our purpose; and this we do, because it was the first time in which a station was ever kept in his house, and consequently *Phaddy* and his wife had to undergo the initiatory ceremony of entertaining Father *Philemy* and his curate, the Reverend *Con M'Coul*, at dinner.

Phaddy Sheemus Phaddy had been, until a short time before the period in question, a very poor man; but a little previous to that event, a brother of his, who had no children, died very rich—that is, for a farmer—and left him his property, or, at least, the greater part of it. While

* That is, of confession—so going to confession is termed by the priests.

Phaddhy was poor, it was surprising what little notice he excited from his Reverence; in fact, I have heard him acknowledge, that during all the days of his poverty, he never got a nod of recognition or kindness from Father Philemy, although he sometimes did, he said, from Father Con, his curate, who honoured him on two occasions so far as to challenge him to a bout at throwing the shoulder-stone, and once to a leaping match, at both of which exercises Father Con, but for the superior power of Phaddhy, had been unrivalled.

"It was an unlucky day to him," says Phaddhy, "that he went to challenge me, at all, at all; for I was the only man that ever bate him, and he wasn't able to hould up his head in the parish for many a day after."

As soon, however, as Phaddhy became a man of substance, one would almost think that there had been a secret relationship between his good fortune and Father Philemy's memory; for, on their first meeting, after Phaddhy's getting the property, the latter shook him most cordially by the hand—a proof that, had not his recollection been as much improved as Phaddhy's circumstances, he could by no means have remembered him; but this is a failing in the memory of many, as well as in that of Father Philemy. Phaddhy, however, *was no Donnell*, to use his own expression, and saw as far into a deal board as another man.

"And so, Phaddhy," said the priest, "how are all your family?—six you have, I think?"

"Four, yer Rev'rence, only four," said Phaddhy, winking at Tim Dillon, his neighbour, who happened to be present—"three boys an' one girl."

"Bless my soul, and so it is indeed, Phaddhy, and I ought to know it; and how is your wife Sarah?—I mean, I hope Mrs. Sheemus Phaddhy is well: by the bye, is that old complaint of hers gone yet?—a pain in the stomach, I think it was, that used to trouble her; I hope in God, Phaddhy, she's getting over it, poor thing. Indeed, I remember telling her, last Easter, when she came to her duty, to eat oaten bread and butter with water-grass every morning, *fasting*, it cured myself of the same complaint."

"Why, thin, I'm very much obliged to your Rev'rence for purscribin' for her," replied Phaddhy; "for, sure enough, she has neither pain nor ache, at the present time, for the best rason in the world, docthor, that she'll be dead jist seven years, if God spares yer Rev'rence an' myself till to-morrow fortnight, about five o'clock in the mornin'."

This was more than Father Philemy could stand with a good conscience, so after getting himself out of the dilemma as well as he could, he shook Phaddhy again very cordially by the hand, saying, "Well, good bye, Phaddhy, and God be good to poor Sarah's soul—I now remember her funeral, sure enough, and a dacent one it was, for indeed she was a woman that had every body's good word—and, between you and me, she made a happy death, that's as far as we can judge here; for, after all, there may be danger, Phaddhy, there may be danger, you understand—however, it's your own business, and your duty, too, to think of that; but I believe you're not the man that would be apt to forget her."

"Phaddhy, ye thief o' the world," said Tim Dillon, when Father Philemy was gone, "there's no comin' up to ye; how could you make sich a fool of his Rev'rence, as to tell 'im that Katty was dead, and that you had ony four childher, an' you has eleven o'them, an' the wife in good health?"

"Why, jist, Tim," replied Phaddhy, with his usual shrewdness, "to tache his Rev'rence himself to practice truth a little: if he didn't know that I got the stockin' of guineas and the Lisnaskey farm by my brother Barney's death, do ye think that he'd notish me at all at all?—not himself, avick; an' maybe he won't be afther comin' round to me for a sack of my best oats,* instead of the bushel I used to give him, and houldin' a couple of stations wid me every year."

"But won't he go mad when he hears you tould him nothing but lies?"

"Not now, Tim," answered Phaddhy—"not now; thank God, I'm not a poor man, an' he'll keep his temper. I'll warrant you the horsewhip won't be up now, although, afore this, I wouldn't say but it might—though the poorest day I ever was, id's myself that wouldn't let priest or friar lay a horsewhip to my back, an' that *you* know, Tim."

Phaddhy's sagacity, however, was correct; for, a short time after this conversation, Father Philemy, when collecting his oats, gave him a call, laughed heartily at the sham account of Katty's death, examined young Briney in his Latin, who was called after his uncle—pronounced him very *cute*, and likely to become a great scholar—promised his interest with the bishop to get him into Maynooth, and left the family, after having shaken hands with, and stroked down the heads of, all the children.

When Phaddhy, on the Sunday in question, heard the public notice given of the Station about to be held in his house, notwithstanding his correct knowledge of Father Philemy's character, on which he looked with a competent portion of contempt, he felt a warmth of pride about his heart, that arose from the honour of having a station, and of entertaining the clergy, in their official capacity, under his own roof, and at his own expense—that gave him, he thought, a personal consequence, which even the "stockin' of guineas" and the Lisnaskey farm were unable, of themselves, to confer upon him. He did enjoy, 'tis true, a very fair portion of happiness on succeeding to his brother's property; but this would be a triumph over the envious and ill-natured remarks which several of his neighbours and distant relations had taken the liberty of indulging in against him, on the occasion of his good fortune. He left the chapel, therefore, in good spirits, whilst Briney, on the contrary, hung a lip of more melancholy pendency than usual, in dread apprehension of the examination that he expected to be inflicted on him by his Reverence at the Station.

Before I introduce the conversation which took place between Phaddhy and Briney, as they went home, on the subject of this literary ordeal, I must observe, that there is a custom, hereditary in some Irish families, of calling fathers by their *Christian* names, instead of by the usual appellation of "father." This usage was observed, not only by Phaddhy and his son, but by all the Phaddhys of that family, generally. Their surname was *Doran*, but in consequence of the great numbers in that part of the country who bore the same name, it was necessary, as of old, to dis-

* The priest, accompanied by a couple of servants, each with a horse and sack, collects from such of his parishioners as can afford it, a quantity of oats, varying with the circumstances of the donor. This collection—called *Queeting*—is voluntary on the part of his parishioners, who may refuse it if they wish; very few are found, however, hardy enough to risk the obloquy of declining to contribute, and the consequence is that the custom operates with as much force as if it were legal and compulsory.

tinguish the several branches of it by the Christian names of their fathers and grandfathers, and sometimes this distinction went as far back as the great-grandfather. For instance—Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy, meant Phaddhy, the son of Sheemus, the son of Phaddhy; and his son, Briney, was called, Brian Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy, or, *anglice*, Bernard the son of Patrick, the son of James, the son of Patrick. But the custom of children calling fathers, in a *vice voce* manner, by their Christian names, was independent of the other more general usage of the patronymic.

“Well, Briney,” said Phaddhy, as the father and son returned home, cheek by jowl, from the chapel, “I suppose Father Philemy will go very deep in the Latin wid ye on Thursday; do ye think ye’ll be able to answer him?”

“Why, Phaddhy,” replied Briney, “how could I be able to answer a clargy?—doesn’t he know all the languages, and I’m only in the *Fibula Æsiopii* yet.”

“Is that Latin or Greek, Briney?”

“It’s Latin, Phaddhy.”

“And what’s the translation of that?”

“It signifies the Fables of Æsiopius.”

“Bliss my sowl! and Briney, did ye consther that out of yer own head?”

“Hogh! that’s little of it. If ye war to hear me consther *Gallus Gallinaceus*, a dunghill cock!”

“And, Briney, are ye in Greek at all yet?”

“No, Phaddhy, I’ll not be in Greek till I’m in Virgil and Horace, and thin I’ll be near finished.”

“And how long will it be till that, Briney?”

“Why, Phaddhy, you know I’m only a year and a half at the Latin, and in two years more I’ll be in the Greek.”

“Do ye think will ye ever be as-larned as Father Philemy, Briney?”

“Don’t ye know whin I’m a clargy I will; but I’m only a *lignum sacerdotis* yet, Phaddhy.”

“What’s *lignum sacerdotis*, Briney?”

“A block of a priest, Phaddhy.”

“Now, Briney, I suppose Father Philemy knows every thing.”

“Ay, to be sure he does; all the languages that’s spoken through the world, Phaddhy.”

“And must all the priests know them, Briney?—how many are they?”

“Seven—sartinly, every priest must know them, or how could they lay the divil, if he’d spake to them in a tongue they couldn’t understand, Phaddhy?”

“Ah, I declare, Briney, I see it now; ony for that, poor Father Philip, the heavens be his bed, wouldn’t be able to lay ould Warnock, that haunted Squire Sloethorn’s stables.”

“Is that when the two horses was stole, Phaddhy?”

“The very time, Briney; but God be thanked, Father Philip settled him to the day of judgment.”

“And where did he put him, Phaddhy?”

“Why, he wanted to be put anundher the hearth-stone; but Father Philip made him walk away with himself into a thumb-bottle, and tied a

stone to it, and then sent him to where he got a cooling, the thief, at the bottom of the lough behind the house."

"Well, I'll tell you what I'm thinking I'll be apt to do, Phaddhy, when I'm a clargy."

"And what is that, Briney?"

"Why, I'll—but, Phaddhy, don't be talking of this, bekase, if it should come to be known, I might get my brains knocked out by some of the heretics."

"Never fear, Briney, there's no danger of *that*—but what is it?"

"Why, I'll translate all the Protestants into asses, and then we'll get our hands *red* of them altogether."

"Well, that flogs for cuteness, and it's a wondher the clargy* does n't do it, and them has the power; for 'twould give us pace entirely. But, Briney, will you speak in Latin to Father Philemy on Thursday?"

"To tell you the thruth, Phaddhy, I would rather he wouldn't examine me this bout, at all at all."

"Ay, but you know we couldn't go agin him, Briney, bekase he promised to get you into the college. Will you speak some Latin now till I hear you?"

"Hem!—*Verbum personaley cohairit cum nomnatibo numbera at parsona at numquam sera yeast at bonis moras voia.*"

"Bless my heart!—and, Briney, where's that taken from?"

"From Syntax, Phaddhy."

"And who *was* Shintax—do you know, Briney?"

"He was a Roman, Phaddhy, bekase there's a Latin prayer in the beginning of the book."

"Ay, was he—a priest, I'll warrant him. Well, Briney, do you mind yer Latin, and get on on wid yer larnin', and when you grow up you'll have a pair of boots, and a horse of your own (and a good broadcloth black coat, too,) to ride on, every dit as good as Father Philemy's, and may be better nor Father Con's."

"From this point, which usually wound up these colloquies between the father and son, the conversation generally diverged into the more spacious fields of science; so that, by the time they reached home, Briney had probably given the father a learned dissertation upon the elevation of the clouds above the earth, and told him within how many thousand miles they approached it, at their nearest point of approximation.

"Katty," said Phaddhy, when he got home, "we're to have a station here on Thursday next: 'twas given out from the altar to-day by Father Philemy."

"Oh, wurrah, wurrah!" exclaimed Katty, overwhelmed at the consciousness of her own incapacity to get up a dinner in sufficient style for such guests—"wurrah, wurrah! Phaddhy, ahagur, what on the livin' earth will we do at all at all! Why, we'll never be able to manage it."

"Arrah why, Katty, woman; what do they want but their skinful to eat and dhrink, and I'm sure we're able to allow them that, any way?"

"Arrah, bad manners to me, but you're enough to vex a saint—their skinful to eat and dhrink!—you common crathur you, to speak that

* I have no hesitation in asserting that the bulk of the uneducated peasantry really believe that the priests have this power.

way, of the clargy, as if it was ourselves or the labourers you war spaking of."

"Ay, and aren't we every bit as good as they are, if you go to that?—haven't we sowls to be saved as well as themselves?"

"'As good as they are!'—as good as the clargy!! *Manum a yea agus a wurrah!*"—listen to what he says! Phaddhy, take care of yourself, you've got rich, now; but, for all that, take care of yourself. You had betther not bring the priest's ill-will, or his bad heart upon us. You know they never thruv that had it; and maybe it's a short time your riches might stay wid you, or maybe it's a short time you might stay wid them: at any rate, God forgive you, and I hope he will, for makin' use of sich unsanctified words to your lawful clargy."

"Well, but what do you intind to do?—or, what do you think of getting for them?" inquired Phaddhy.

"Indeed, it's very little matther what I get for them, or what I'll do either—sorrow one of myself cares almost: for a man in his senses, that ought to know better, to make use of such low language about the blessed and holy crathurs, that hasn't a stain of sin about them, no more than the child unborn!"

"So you think."

"So I think! aye, and it would be betther for you that you thought so, too; but ye don't know what's before ye yet, Phaddhy; and now take warnin' in time, and mend your life."

"Why, what do you see wrong in my life? Am I a drunkard? am I lazy? did ever I neglect my business? was I ever bad to you or to the childher? didn't I always give yez yer fill to ate, and kept yez as well clad as yer neighbours that was richer? Don't I go to my knees, too, every night and morning?"

"That's true enough, but what signifies it all? When did ye cross a priest's foot, to go to your duty? Not for the last five years, Phaddhy—not since poor Torly (God be good to him) died of the mazles, and that'll be five years, a fortnight before Christmas."

"And what are you the betther of all yer confessions? Did they ever mend yer temper, avourneen? no, indeed, Katty, but you're ten times worse tempered coming back from the priest than before ye go to him."

"Oh! Phaddhy! Phaddhy! God look down upon you this day, or any man that's in yer hardened state—I see there's no use in spaking to you, for you'll still be the ould cut."

"Ay, will I; so you may as well give up talking about it. Arrah, woman!" said Phaddhy, raising his voice, "who does it ever make betther—show me a man now in all the neighbourhood, that's a pin-point the holier of it? Isn't there Jemmy Shields, that goes to *his duty* wanst a month, malivogues his wife and family this minute, and then claps them to a Rosary the next; but the ould boy's a thrife to him of a fast day, after coming from the priest. Betune ourselves, Katty, you're not much behind him."

Katty made no reply to him, but turned up her eyes, and crossed herself, at the wickedness of her unmanageable husband.

* My soul to God and the Virgin.

"Well, Briney," said she, turning abruptly to the son, "don't take pattrern by that man, if you expect to do any good; let him be a warning to you to mind yer duty, and respect yer clargy—and prepare yerself, now that I think of it, to go to Father Philemy or Father Con on Thursday: but don't be said or led by that man, for I'm sure I dunna how he intinds to face the Man above when he laves this world—and to keep from his duty, and to spake of his clargy as he does!"

There are few men without their weak sides. Phaddhy, although the priests were never very much his favourites, was determined to give what he himself called a *let-out* on this occasion, simply to show his ill-natured neighbours that, notwithstanding their unfriendly remarks, he knew "what it was to be dacent," as well as his betters; and Katty seconded him in his resolution, from her profound veneration for the *clargy*.

Every preparation was accordingly entered into, and every plan adopted that could possibly be twisted into a capability of contributing to the entertainment of Fathers Philemy and Con.

One of those large round stercoraceous nose-gays, that, like many other wholesome plants, make up by odour what is wanting in floral beauty, and which lay rather too *contagious*, as Phaddhy expressed it, to the door of his house, was transplanted by about half-a-dozen labourers, and as many barrows, in the course of a day or two, to a bed some yards distant from the spot of its first growth; because, without any reference whatever to the nasal sense, it was considered that it might be rather an *eye-sore* to their Reverences, on approaching the door. Several concave inequalities, which constant attrition had worn in the earthen floor of the kitchen, were filled up with blue clay, brought on a car from the bank of a neighbouring river, for the purpose. The dresser, chairs, tables, pots, and pans, all underwent a rigour of discipline, as if some remarkable event was about to occur; nothing less, it must be supposed, than a complete domestic revolution, and a new state of things. Phaddhy himself cut two or three large furze bushes, and, sticking them on the end of a pitchfork, attempted to sweep down the chimney. For this purpose he mounted on the back of a chair, that he might be able to reach the top with more ease; but, in order that his footing might be firm, he made one of the servant-men sit upon the chair, to keep it steady during the operation. Unfortunately, however, it so happened that this man was needed to assist in removing a meal-chest to another part of the house; this was under Katty's superintendence, who, seeing the fellow sit rather more at his ease than she thought the hurry and importance of the occasion permitted, called him, with a little of her usual sharpness and energy, to assist in removing the chest. For some reason or other, which it is not necessary to mention here, the fellow bounced from his seat, in obedience to the shrill tones of Katty, and the next moment Phaddhy (who was in a state of abstraction in the chimney, and totally unconscious of what was going forward below) made a descent decidedly contrary to the nature of that which most aspirants would be inclined to relish. A severe stun, however, was the most serious injury he received on his own part, and several round oaths, with a good drubbing, fell to the servant; but unluckily he left the furze bush behind him in the highest and narrowest part of the chimney; and

were it not that an active fellow succeeded in dragging it up from the outside of the roof, the chimney ran considerable risk, as Katty said, of being choked.

But along with the lustration which every fixture within the house was obliged to undergo, it was necessary that all the youngsters should get new clothes; and for this purpose, Jemmy Lynch, the tailor, with his two journeymen and three apprentices, were sent for in all haste, that he might fit Phaddy and each of his six sons, in suits, from a piece of home-made frize, which Katty did not intend to break up till "towards Christmas."

A station is no common event, and accordingly the web was cut up, and the tailor left a wedding-suit half-made, belonging to Edy Dolan, a thin old bachelor, who took it into his head to try his hand at becoming a husband ere he'd die. As soon as Jemmy and his train arrived, a door was taken off the hinges, and laid on the floor, for himself to sit upon, and a new drugget quilt was spread beside it, for his journeymen and apprentices. With nimble fingers they plied the needle and thread, and when night came, a turf was got, into which was stuck a piece of rod, pointed at one end and split at the other; the "white candle," slipped into a shaving of the fringe that was placed in the cleft end of the stick, was then lit, whilst many a pleasant story, told by Jemmy, who had been once in Dublin for six weeks, delighted the circle of lookers-on that sat around them.

At length the day previous to the important one arrived. Hitherto, all hands had contributed to make every thing in and about the house look "decent;"—scouring, washing, sweeping, pairing, and repairing, had been all disposed of. The boys got their hair cut to the quick with the tailor's scissors; and such of the girls as were not full grown, got only that which grew on the upper part of the head taken off, by a cut somewhat resembling the clerical tonsure, so that they looked extremely wild and unsettled, with their straight locks projecting over their ears; every thing, therefore, of the less important arrangements had been gone through—but the weighty and momentous concern was as yet unsettled.

This was the feast; and alas! never was the want of experience more strongly felt than here. Katty was a bad cook, even to a proverb; and bore so indifferent a character in the country for cleanliness, that very few would undertake to eat her butter. Indeed, she was called Katty *Sallagh** on this account: however, this prejudice, whether ill or well founded, was wearing fast away, since Phaddy had succeeded to the stocking of guineas, and the Lisnaskey farm. It might be, indeed, that her former poverty helped her neighbours to see this blemish more clearly: but the world is so seldom in the habit of judging people's qualities or failings through this uncharitable medium, that the supposition is rather doubtful. Be this as it may, the arrangements for the breakfast and dinner must be made. There was plenty of bacon, and abundance of cabbage—eggs, *ad infinitum*—oaten and wheaten bread in piles—turkeys, geese, pullets, as fat as aldermen—cream as rich as Croesus—and three gallons of poteen, one sparkle of which, as Father Philemy said in the

* Dirty Katty.

course of the evening, would lay the hairs on St. Francis himself in his most self-negative mood, if he saw it. So far so good: every thing excellent and abundant in its way. Still the higher and more refined items—the *delicia epularum*—must be added. *White bread*, and tea, and sugar were yet to be got; and lump-sugar for the punch; and a tea-pot and cups and saucers to be borrowed; all which was accordingly done.

Well, suppose every thing disposed for to-morrow's feast;—suppose Phaddhy himself to have butchered the fowl, because Katty, who was not able to hear the sight of blood, had not the heart to kill “the crathurs:” and imagine to yourself one of the servant men taking his red-hot tongs out of the fire, and squeezing a large lump of hog's lard, placed in a grisset, or *Kam*, on the hearth, to grease all their brogues; then see in your mind's eye those two fine, fresh-looking girls, slyly taking their old rusty fork out of the fire, and going to a bit of three-cornered looking-glass, pasted into a board, or, perhaps, to a pail of water, there to curl up their rich-flowing locks, that had hitherto never known a curl but such as nature gave them.

On one side of the hob sit two striplings, “thryin' wan another in their catechiz,” that they may be able to answer, with some credit, to-morrow. On the other hob sits Briney, hard at his Syntax, with the *Fibula Æsioptii*, as he called it, placed open at a particular passage, on the seat under him, with a hope that, when Father Philemy will examine him, the book may open at his favourite fable of “*Gallus Gallinaceus*—a dung-hill cock.” Phaddhy himself is obliged to fast this day, there being one day of his penance yet unperformed, since the last time he was at his duty, which was, as aforesaid, about five years: and Katty, now that every thing is cleaned up and ready, kneels down in a corner to go over her beads, rocking herself in a placid silence that is only broken by an occasional malediction against the servants, or the cat, when it attempts the abduction of one of the dead fowl.

The next morning the family were up before the sun, who rubbed his eyes, and swore that he must have overslept himself, on seeing such a merry column of smoke dancing over Phaddhy's chimney. A large wooden dish was placed upon the threshold of the kitchen door, filled with water, in which, with a trencher of oatmeal for soap*, they successively scrubbed their faces and hands to some purpose. In a short time afterwards, Phaddhy and the sons were cased, stiff and awkward, in their new suits, with the tops of their fingers just peeping over the sleeve cuffs. The horses in the stable were turned out to the fields, being obliged to make room for their betters, that were soon expected under the reverend bodies of Father Philemy and his curate; whilst about half a bushel of oats was left in the manger, to regale them on their arrival. Little Richard Mazuire was sent down to the *five-acres*, with the pigs, on purpose to keep them from about the house, they not being supposed fit company at a set-dinner. A roaring turf fire, which blazed two yards up the chimney, had been put down; on this was placed a large pot, filled with water for the tea, because they had no kettle.

* Fact. Oatmeal is in general substituted for soap, by those who cannot afford to buy the latter.

By this time the morning was tolerably advanced, and the neighbours were beginning to arrive in twos and threes, to wipe out old scores. Katty had sent several of the gorsoons "to see if they could see any sight of the clergy," but hitherto their Reverences were invisible. At length, after several fruitless embassies of this description, Father Con was seen jogging along, on his easy-going hack, engaged in the perusal of *his Office*, previous to his commencing the duties of the day. As soon as his approach was announced, a chair was immediately placed for him in a room off the kitchen—the parlour, such as it was, having been reserved for Father Philemy himself, as the place of greater honour. This was an arrangement, however, which went against the grain of Phaddhy, who, had he got his will, would have established Father Con in the most comfortable apartment of the house: but that old vagabond, human nature, is the same under all circumstances—or, as Katty would have (in her own phraseology) expressed it, "still the ould cut;" for even there the influence of rank and elevation was sufficient to throw merit into the shade; and the parlour-seat was allotted to Father Philemy, merely for being Parish Priest, although it was well known that he could not "*tare off*"* mass in half the time that Father Con could, nor throw a sledge, or shoulder-stone within a perch of him, nor scarcely clear a street-channel, whilst the latter could jump one-and twenty feet at a running leap. But these are rubs which men of merit must occasionally bear; and, when exposed to them, they must only rest satisfied in the consciousness of their own deserts.

From the moment that Father Con became visible, the conversation of those who were collected in Phaddhy's, dropped gradually, as he approached the house, into a silence which was only broken by an occasional short observation, made by one or two of those who were in habits of the greatest familiarity with the priest; but when they heard the noise of his horse's feet near the door, the silence became general and uninterrupted.

There can scarcely be a greater contrast in anything than that presented by the beginning of a station-day and its close. In the morning, the faces of those who are about to confess, present an expression, in which terror, awe, guilt, and veneration, may be easily traced; but in the evening all is mirth and jollity. Before confession every man's memory is employed in running over the catalogue of crimes, as they are to be found in the prayer-books, under the ten commandments, the seven deadly sins, the *Commandments* of the Church, the four sins that cry to heaven for vengeance, and the seven sins against the Holy Ghost.

When Father Con arrived, Phaddhy and Katty were instantly at the door to welcome him.

"*Musha, coad millia failtha ghud †,*" to our house, Father Con, avourneen!" said Katty, dropping him a low curtsy, and spreading her new,

* The people look upon that priest as the best and most learned who can perform the ceremony of the mass in the shortest period of time. They call it, as above, "*tareing off.*" The quickest description of mass, however, is the "*hunting mass,*" so termed from the speed at which the priest goes over it—that is, "at the rate of a hunt."

† A hundred thousand welcomes to you.

brown, quilted petticoat, as far out on each side of her as it would go—
 “musha, an’ it’s you that’s welcome from my heart out.”

“I thank you,” said honest Con, who, as he knew not her name, did not pretend to know it.

“Well, Father Con,” said Phaddhy, “this is the first time you have ever come to us this way; but, please God, it won’t be the last, I hope.”

“I hope not, Phaddhy,” said Father Con, who, notwithstanding his simplicity of character, loved a good dinner in the very core of his heart, “I hope not, *indeed*, Phaddhy.”

He then threw his eye about the premises, to see what point he might set his temper to during the remainder of the day; for it is right to inform our readers that a priest’s temper, at a station, generally rises or falls, according to the prospect of his cheer.

Here, however, a little vista, or pantry, jutting out from the kitchen, and left ostentatiously open, presented him with a view which made his very nose curl with kindness. What it contained we do not pretend to say, not having seen it ourselves; we judge, therefore, only by its effects upon his physiognomy.

“Why, Phaddhy,” he says, “this is a very fine house you’ve got over you;” throwing his eye again towards a wooden buttress which supported one of the rafters that was broken.

“Why then, your Riverence, it would not be a bad one,” Phaddhy replied, “if it had a new roof, and new side-walls; and I intend to get both next summer, if God spares me till then.”

“Then, upon my word, if it had new side-walls, a new roof, and new gavels, too,” replied Father Con, “it would look certainly a great deal the better for it;—and do you intend to get them next summer, Paddy?”

“If God spares me, Sir.”

“Are all these fine gorsoons yours, Phaddhy?”

“Why, so Katty says, your Reverence,” replied Phaddhy, with a good-natured laugh.

“Haven’t you got one of them for the Church, Phaddhy?”

“Yes, your Riverence, there’s one of them that I hope will live to have the robes upon him. Come over, Briney, and speak to Father Con.—He’s not very far in his Latin yet, Sir; but his master tells me that he hasn’t the likes of him in his school for brightness—Briney, will you come over, I say; come over, sarrah, and spake to the gentleman, and him wants to shake hands wid you—come up man, what are you afeard of?—sure Father Con’s not going to examine you now.”

“No, no, Briney,” said Father Con; “I’m not about to examine you at present.”

“He’s a little dashed, yer Reverence, bekase he thought you war going to put him through some of his Latin,” said the father, bringing him up like a culprit to Father Con, who shook hands with him, and, after a few questions as to the books he read, and his progress, dismissed him.

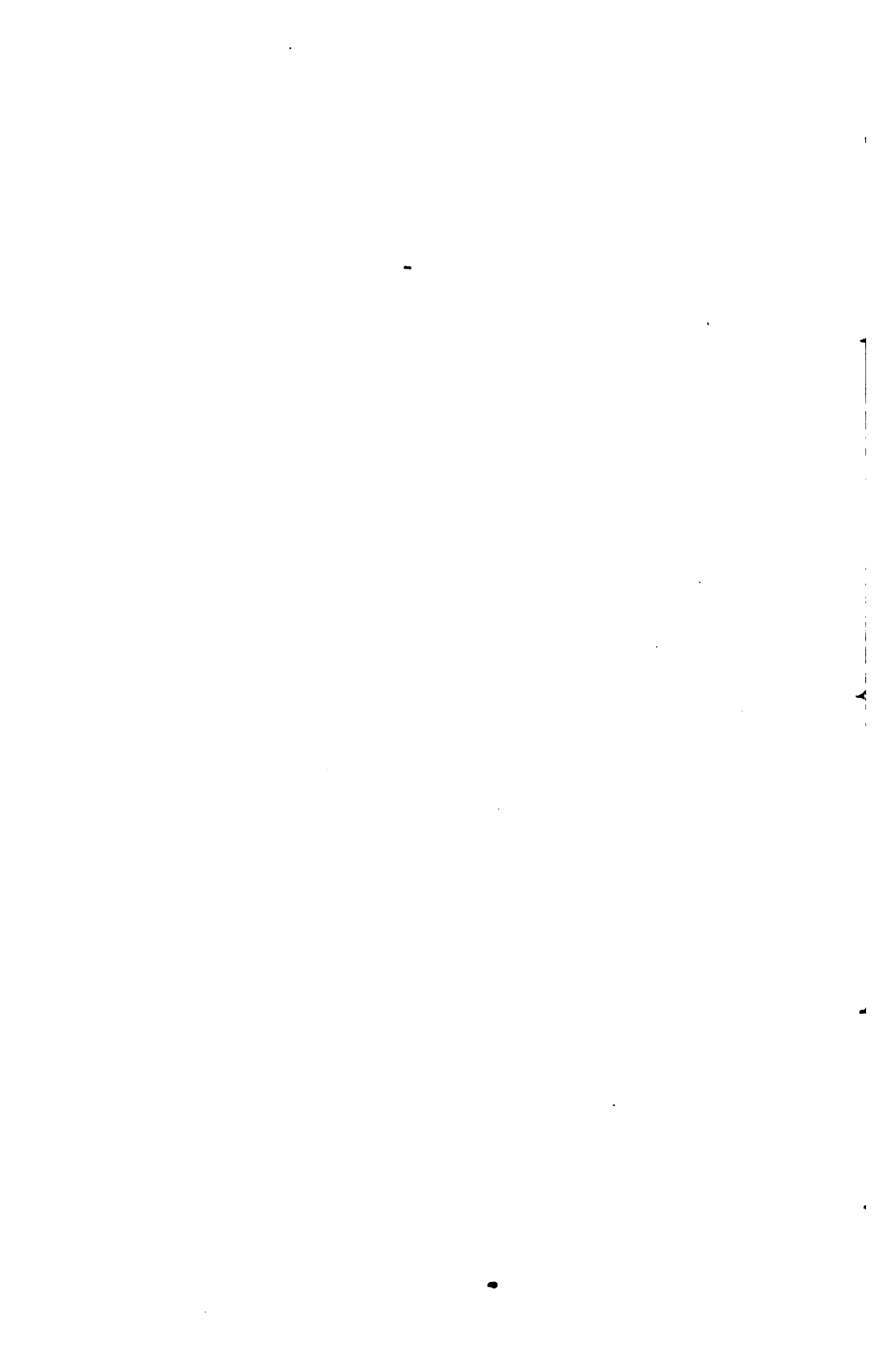
“But, Father Con, wid submission,” said Katty, “where’s Father Philemy from us?—sure, we expected him along wid you, and he wouldn’t go to disappoint us?”

“Oh, you needn’t fear that, Katty,” replied Father Con; “he’ll be



Katty and her daughter going to Confession

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here presently—before breakfast, I'll engage for him, at any rate; but he had a touch of a headache this morning, and wasn't able to rise so early as I was."

During this conversation a little crowd collected about the door of the room in which he was to hear the confessions, each struggling and fighting to get the first turn; but here, as in the more important concerns of this world, the weakest went to the wall. He now went into the room, and taking Katty herself first, the door was closed upon them, and he gave her absolution; and thus he continued to confess and absolve them, one by one, until breakfast.

Whenever a station occurs in Ireland, a crowd of mendicants and other strolling impostors seldom fail to attend it; on this occasion, at least, they did not. The day, though frosty, was fine; and the door was surrounded by a train of this description, including both sexes, some sitting on stones, some on stools, with their blankets rolled up under them; and others, more ostensibly devout, on their knees, hard at prayer; which, lest their piety might escape notice, our readers may be assured, they did not offer up in silence. On one side you might observe a sturdy fellow, with a pair of tattered urchins secured to his back by a sheet or blanket pinned across his breast with a long iron skewer, their heads just visible at his shoulders, munching a thick piece of wheaten bread, and the father on his knees, with a huge wooden cross in his hand, repeating his *padereens*, and occasionally throwing a jolly eye towards the door, or through the window, opposite which he knelt, into the kitchen, as often as any peculiar stir or commotion led him to suppose that breakfast, the loadstar of his devotion, was about to be produced.

Scattered about the door were knots of these, men and women, occasionally chatting together; and when the subject of their conversation happened to be exhausted, resuming their beads until some new topic would occur, and so on alternately.

The interior of the kitchen where the neighbours were assembled, presented an appearance somewhat more decorous. Andy Lalor, the mass-server, in whom the priest had the greatest confidence, stood in a corner examining, in their catechism, those who intended to confess; and, if they were able to stand the test, he gave them a bit of twisted brown paper as a ticket, and they were received at the tribunal.

The first question the priest uniformly puts to the penitent is, "Can you repeat the *Confiteor*?" If the latter answers in the affirmative, he goes on until he comes to the words, *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa*, when he stops, it being improper to repeat the remainder until after he has confessed; but, if he is ignorant of the "*Confiteor*," *the priest repeats it for him!* and he commences the rehearsal of his offences, specifically as they occurred; and not only does he reveal his individual crimes, but his very thoughts and intentions. By this regulation our readers may easily perceive, that the penitent is completely at the mercy of the priest—that all family feuds, quarrels, and secrets are laid open to his eye—that the ruling passions of men's lives are held up before him, the weaknesses and propensities of nature—all the unguarded avenues of the human heart and character are brought within his positive knowledge,

and that too, as they exist in the young and the old, the married and the single, the male and the female.

It was curious to remark the ludicrous expression of temporary sanctity which was apparent on the countenances of many young men and maidens who were remarkable in the neighbourhood for attending dances and wakes, but who, on the present occasion, were sobered down to a gravity which sat very awkwardly upon them; particularly in the eyes of those who knew the lightness and drollery of their characters. This, however, was observable only *before* confession; for, as soon as "the priest's blessed hand had been over them," their gloom and anxiety passed away, and the thoughtless buoyancy of their natural disposition resumed its influence over their minds. A good-humoured nod, or a sly wink, from a young man to his female acquaintance, would now be indulged in; or, perhaps, a small joke would escape, which seldom failed to produce a subdued laugh from such as *had* confessed, or an impatient rebuke from those who had *not*.

"Tim!" one would exclaim, "arn't ye ashamed or afeard to get an that way, and his Reverence undher the wan roof wid ye?"

"Tim, you had betther dhrop your joking," a second would observe, "and not be putting us through other *, when we have our offences to remimber; you have got your *job* over, and now you have nothing to trouble you."

"Indeed, it's fine behaviour," a third would say, "and you afther coming from the priest's knee; and what is more, didn't *reave* † yet; but wait till Father Con appears, and, I'll warrant, you'll be as grave as another, for all you're so stout now."

The conversation would then pass to the merits of Father Philemy and Father Con, as Confessors.

"Well," one would observe—"for my part, I'd rather go to Father Philemy, fifty times over, than wanst to Father Con, bekase he never axes questions; but whatever you like to tell him, he hears it, and forgives you at wanst."

"And so sign's an it," observed another; "he could confess more in a day than Father Con could in a week."

"But for all that," observed Andy Lalor, "it's still best to go to the man that puts the questions, you persave, and that won't let the turning of a straw escape him. Whin myself goes to Father Philemy, somehow or other, I totally disremember more nor wan half of what I intinded to tell him, but Father Con misses nothing, for he axes it."

When the last observation was finished, Father Con, finding that the usual hour for breakfast had arrived, came into the kitchen, to prepare for the celebration of mass. For this purpose, a table was cleared, and just in the nick of time arrived old Moll Brian, the vestment woman, or itinerant sacristan, whose usual occupation was to carry the priests' *robes* and other apparatus, from station to station. In a short time, Father Con was surpliced and robed; Andy Lalor, whose face was charged with commensurate importance during the ceremony, *served* Mass, and answered the priest stoutly in Latin, although he had not the advantage

* Confusing us.

† Communicate.

of understanding that sacerdotal language. Those who had *confessed*, now *communicated*; after which, each of them took a draught of water out of a small jug, which was handed round from one to another. The ceremony then closed, and those who had partaken of the sacrament, with the exception of such as were detained for breakfast, after filling their bottles with holy water, went home with a light heart. A little before the mass had been finished, Father Philemy arrived; but as Phaddhy and Katty were then preparing to *recede**, they could not at that moment give him a formal reception. As soon, however, as communion was over, the *ead milliah faitah* was repeated with the usual warmth, by both, and by all their immediate friends.

Breakfast was now laid in Katty's best style, and with an originality of arrangement that scorned all precedent. Two tables were placed, one after another, in the kitchen; for the other rooms were not sufficiently large to accommodate the company. Father Philemy filled the seat of honour at the head of the table, with his back to an immense fire. On his right hand sat Father Con; on his left, Phaddhy himself, "to keep the *clergy* company;" and, in due succession after them, their friends and neighbours, each taking precedence according to the most scrupulous notions of respectability. Beside Father Con sat "Pether Malone," a "young collegian," who had been sent home from Maynooth to try his native air, for the recovery of his health, which was declining. He arrived only a few minutes after Father Philemy, and was a welcome reinforcement to Phaddhy, in the arduous task of sustaining the conversation with suitable credit.

With respect to the breakfast, I can only say, that it was superabundant—that the tea was as black as bog water—that there were hen, turkey, and geese eggs—plates of toast soaked, crust and crumb, in butter; and lest there might be a deficiency, one of the daughters sat on a stool at the fire, with her open hand, by way of a fire-screen, across her red, half-scorched brows, toasting another plateful, and, to crown all, on each corner of the table was a bottle of whiskey. At the lower board sat the youngsters, under the *surveillance* of Katty's sister, who presided in that quarter. When they were commencing breakfast, "Father Philemy," said Katty, "wont yer Rev'ence bless the mate †, if ye plase?"

"If I don't do it myself," said Father Philemy, who was just after sweeping the top off a turkey egg, "I'll get them that will. Come," said he to the collegian, "give us grace, Peter; you'll never learn younger."

This, however, was an unexpected blow to Peter, who knew that an English grace would be incompatible with his "college breeding," yet was unprovided with any in Latin. The eyes of the company were now fixed upon him, and he blushed like scarlet on finding himself in a predicament so awkward and embarrassing. "*Aliquid, Petre, aliquid; 'de profundis'—si habes nihil aliud,*" said Father Philemy, feeling for his embarrassment, and giving him a hint. This was not lost, for Peter began, and gave them the *De profundis*—a Latin psalm, which Roman Catholics repeat for the relief of the souls in purgatory. They forgot,

* That is, the sacrament.

† Food

however, that there was a person in company who considered himself as having an equal claim to the repetition of at least the one-half of it; and accordingly, when Peter got up and repeated the first verse, Andy Lalor got also on his legs, and repeated the response*. This staggered Peter a little, who hesitated, as uncertain how to act.

"*Perge, Petre, perge,*" said Father Philemy, looking rather wistfully at his egg—"perge, stultus est et asinus quoque." Peter and Andy proceeded until it was finished, when they resumed their seats.

The conversation during breakfast was as sprightly, as full of fun and humour, as such breakfasts usually are. The priest, Phaddhy, and the young collegian, had a topic of their own, whilst the rest were engaged in a kind of bye-play, until the meal was finished.

"Father Philemy," said Phaddhy, in his capacity of host, "before we begin we'll all take a drop of what's in the bottle, if it's not displasing to yer Reverence; and, sure, I know, 'tis the same that doesn't come wrong at a station, any how."

This, *more majorum*, was complied with; and the glass, as usual, went round the table, beginning with their Reverences.

Hitherto, Father Philemy had not had time to bestow any attention on the state of Katty's larder, as he was in the habit of doing, with a view to ascertain the several items contained therein for dinner. But as soon as the breakfast-things were removed, and the coast clear, he took a peep into the pantry, and, after throwing his eye over its contents, sat down at the fire, making Phaddhy take a seat beside him, for the especial purpose of sounding him as to the practicability of effecting a certain design which was then snugly latent in his Reverence's fancy. The fact was, that on taking the survey of the premises aforesaid, he discovered that, although there was abundance of fowl, and fish, and bacon, and hung-beef—yet, by some unaccountable and disastrous omission, there was neither fresh mutton nor fresh beef. The priest, it must be confessed, was a man of considerable fortitude, but this was a blow for which he was scarcely prepared, particularly as a boiled leg of mutton was one of his fifteen favourite joints at dinner. He accordingly took two or three pinches of snuff in rapid succession, and a seat at the fire, as I have said, placing Phaddhy, unconscious of his design, immediately beside him.

Now, the reader knows that Phaddhy was a man possessing a considerable portion of dry, sarcastic humour, along with that natural quickness of penetration and shrewdness for which most of the Irish peasantry are, in a very peculiar degree, remarkable; add to this that Father Philemy, in consequence of his contemptuous bearing to him before he came in for his brother's property, stood not very high in his estimation. The priest knew this, and consequently felt that the point in question would require to be managed, on his part, with suitable address.

"Phaddhy," says his Reverence, "sit down here till we chat a little, before I commence the duties of the day. I'm happy to see that you have such a fine thriving family: how many sons and daughters have you?"

* This prayer is generally repeated by two persons, who recite each a verse alternately.

"Six sons, yer Reverence," replied Phaddy, "and five daughters: indeed, Sir, they're as well to be seen as their neighbours, considhering all things. Poor crathurs, they get fair play * now, thank God, compared to what they used to get—God rest their poor uncle's sowl for that! Only for him, your Reverence, there would be very few inquiring this or any other day about them."

"Did he die as rich as they said, Phaddy?" inquired his Reverence.

"Hut, Sir," replied Phaddy, determined to take what he afterwards called a *rise* out of the priest; "they knew little about it—as rich as they said, Sir! no, but three times as rich, itself: but, any how, he was the man that could make the money."

"I'm very happy to hear it, Phaddy, on your account, and that of your children. God be good to him—*requiescat animus ejus in pace, per omnia secula seculorum, Amen!*—he liked a drop in his time, Phaddy, as well as ourselves, eh?"

"*Amen, amen*—the heavens be his bed!—he did, poor man! but he had it at first cost, your Reverence, for he *run* it all himself in the mountains: he could afford to take it."

"Yes, Phaddy, the heavens be his bed, I pray; no Christmas or Easter ever passed, but he was sure to send me the little keg of stuff that never saw water; but, Phaddy, there's one thing that concerns me about him, in regard of his love of drink—I'm afraid it's a throuble to him where he is at present; and I was sorry to find that, although he died full of money, he didn't think it worth his while to leave even the price of a mass to be said for the benefit of his own soul."

"Why, sure you know, Father Philemy, that he wasn't what they call a dhrinking man: once a quarther, or so, he sartinly did take a jorum; and except at these times, he was very sober. But God look upon us, yer Reverence—or upon myself, any way; for if *he's* to suffer for his doings that way, I'm afeard *we'll* have a troublesome reck'ning of it."

"Hem, a-hem!—Phaddy," replied the priest, "he has raised you and your children from poverty, at all events, and you ought to consider *that*. If there is any thing in your power to contribute to the relief of his soul, you have a strong duty upon you to do it; and a number of masses, offered up devoutly, would——"

"Why, he did, Sir, raise both myself and my childre from poverty," said Phaddy, not willing to let that point go farther—"that I'll always own to; and I hope in God that whatever little trouble might be upon him for the dhrup of dhrink, will be wiped off by this kindness to us."

"He hadn't even a *Month's mind* †!"

"And it's not but I spoke to him about both, yer Reverence."

"And what did he say, Phaddy?"

"Phaddy," said he, "I have been giving Father M'Guirk, one way or another, between whiskey, oats, and dues, a great deal of money every

* By this is meant good food and clothing.

† A Month's Mind is the repetition of one or more masses, at the expiration of a month after death, for the repose of a departed soul. There are generally more than the usual number of priests on such occasions: each of whom receives a sum of money, varying according to the wealth of the survivors—sometimes five shillings, and sometimes five guineas.

year; and now, afther I'm dead,' says he, 'isn't it an ungrateful thing of him not to offer up one mass for my sowl, except I leave him payment for it?'"

"Did he say that, Phaddhy?"

"I'm giving you his very words, yer Reverence."

"Phaddhy, I deny it; it's a big lie—he could not make use of such words, and he going to face death. I say you could not listen to them; the hair would stand on your head if he did: but God forgive him!—that's the worst I wish him. Didn't the hair stand on your head, Phaddhy, to hear him?"

"Why, then, to tell yer Reverence God's truth, I can't say it did."

"You can't say it did! and if I was in your coat, I would be ashamed to say it did not. I was always troubled about the way the fellow died, but I hadn't the slightest notion that he went off such a reprobate. I fought *his* battle and *yours* hard enough yesterday; but I knew less about him then than I do now."

"And what, wid submission, did you fight our battles about, yer Reverence?" inquired Phaddhy.

"Yesterday evening, in Parrah More Slevin's, they had him a miser, and yourself they set down as very little better."

"Then I don't think I desarved that from Parrah More, any how, Father I'hilemy; I think I can show myself as dacent as Parrah More or any of *his* faction."

"It was not Parrah More himself, nor his family, that said any thing about you, Phaddy," said the priest, "but others that were present. You must know that we were all to be *starved* here to-day."

"Oh! ho!" exclaimed Phaddhy, who was hit most palpably upon the weakest side—the very sorest spot about him, "they think bekase this is the first station that ever was held in *my* house, that you won't be thrated as you ought; but they'll be disappointed; and I hope, for so far, that yer Reverence and yer friends had no rason to complain."

"Not in the least, Phaddhy, considering that it was a first station; and if the dinner goes as well off as the breakfast, they'll be biting their nails: but I should not wish myself that they would have it in their power to sneer or throw any slur over you about it.—Go along, Dolan," exclaimed his Reverence to a countryman who came in from the street, where those stood who were for confession, to see if he had gone to his room—"Go along, you vagrant, don't you see I'm not gone to the *tribunal* yet?—But it's no matter about that, Phaddhy, it's of other things you ought to think: when were you at your duty?"

"This morning, Sir," replied the other—"but I'd have them to understand, that had the presumption to use my name in any such manner, that I know when and where to be dacent with any mother's son of Parrah More's faction; and *that* I'll be afther whispering to them some of these fine mornings, plase goodness."

"Well, well, Phaddhy, don't put yourself in a passion about it. particularly so soon after having been at confession—it's not right—I told them myself, that we'd have a leg of mutton and a bottle of wine at all events, for it was what *they* had; but that's not worth talking about: when were you with the priest, before, Phaddy?"

"If I wasn't able, it would be another thing, but, as long as I'm able, I'll let them know that I've the spirit"—said Phaddhy, smarting under the imputation of niggardliness—"when was I at confession before, Father Philemy? Why, then, dear forgive me, not these five years;—and I'd surely be the first of the family that would show a mane spirit, or a want of hospitality."

"A leg of mutton is a good dish, and a bottle of wine is fit for the first man in the land!" observed his Reverence; "five years!—why, is it possible you staid away so long, Phaddhy! how could you expect to prosper with five years' burden of sin upon your conscience—what would it cost you ——?"

"Indeed, myself's no judge, your Reverence, as to that; but, cost what it will, I'll get both."

"I say, Phaddhy, what trouble would it cost you to come to your duty twice a year at the very least; and, indeed, I would advise you to become a monthly communicant. Parrah More was speaking of it as to himself, and you ought to go——."

"And I will go and bring Parrah More here to his dinner, this very day, if it was only to let him see with his own eyes ——."

"You ought to go once a month, if it was only to set an example to your children, and to show the neighbours how a man of substance and respectability, and the head of a family, ought to carry himself."

"Where is the best wine got, yer Reverence?"

"Alick M'Loughlin, *my nephew*, I believe, keeps the best wine and spirits in Ballyslantha.—You ought also, Phaddhy, to get a scapular, and become a scapularian; I wish your brother had thought of *that*, and he wouldn't have died in so hardened a state, nor neglected to make a provision for the benefit of his soul, as he did."

"Lave the rest to me, yer Reverence, I'll get it; Mr. M'Loughlin will give me the right sort, if he has it betune him and death."

"M'Loughlin! what are you talking about?"

"Why, what is your Reverence talking about?"

"The scapular," said the priest.

"But I mane the wine and the mutton," says Phaddhy.

"And is that the way you treat me, you reprobate you?" replied his Reverence, in a passion: "is that the kind of attention you're paying me, and I advising you, all this time, *for the good of your soul*? Phaddhy, I tell you, you're enough to vex me to the core—five years!—only once at confession in five years! What do I care about your mutton and your wine?—you may get dozens of them if you wish; or, may be, it would be more like a Christian to never mind getting them, and let the neighbours *laugh* away. It would teach you humility, you hardened creature, and God knows you want it; for my part, I'm speaking to you about other things; but that's the way with the most of you—mention any spiritual subject that concerns your soul, and you turn a deaf ear to it—here, Dolan, come in to your duty. In the meantime, you may as well tell Katty not to boil the mutton too much; it's on your knees you ought to be at your rosary, or the seven penitential psalms, any way."

"Thruce for you, Sir," says Phaddhy; "but as to going wanst a month,

I'm afeard, your Rev'ence, if it would shorten my timper as it does Katty's, that we 'd be bad company for one another: she comes home from confession, newly set, like a razor, every bit as sharp; and I'm sure that I'm within the truth when I say there's no bearing her."

"That's because you have no relish for anything spiritual yourself, you nager you," replied his Reverence, "or you wouldn't see her temper in that light—but, now that I think of it, where did you get that stuff we had at breakfast?"

"Ay, that's the sacret; but I knew yer Rev'ence would like it: did Parrah More aiquil it? No, nor one of his faction couldn't lay his finger on such a dhrop."

"I wish you could get me a few gallons of it," said the priest; "but let us drop that; I say, Phaddhy, you're too worldly and too careless about your duty."

"Well, Father Philemy, there's a good time coming; I'll mend yet."

"You want it, Phaddhy."

"Would three gallons do, Sir?"

"I would rather you would make it five, Phaddhy; but go to your rosary."

"It's the penitential psalms, first, Sir," said Phaddhy, "and the rosary at night. I'll try, ayhow; and if I can make off five for you, I will."

"Thank you, Phaddhy; but I would recommend you to say the rosary *before* night."

"I believe yer Reverence is right," replied Phaddhy, looking somewhat slyly in the priest's face; "I think it's best to make sure of it now, in regard that in the evening, your Reverence—do you persave?"

"Yes," said his Reverence: "you're in a better frame of mind at present, Phaddhy, being fresh from confession." So saying, his Reverence—for whom Phaddhy, with all his shrewdness in general, was not a match—went into his room, that he might send home about four dozen of honest, good-humoured, thoughtless, jovial, swearing, drinking, fighting Hibernians, free from every possible stain of sin and wickedness!

"Are you all ready now?" said the priest, to a crowd of country people who were standing about the kitchen door, pressing to get the "first turn" at the tribunal, which on this occasion consisted of a good oaken chair, with his Reverence upon it.

"Why do you crush forward in that manner, you ill-bred spalpeens? Can't you stand back, and behave yourselves like common Christians?—back with you! or, if you make me get my whip, I'll soon clear you from about the dacent man's door. Hagarty, why do you crush them two girls there, you great Turk you? Look at the vagabonds! Where's my whip?" said he, running in, and coming out in a fury, when he commenced cutting about him, until they dispersed in all directions. He then returned into the house; and, after calling in about two dozen, began to catechise them as follows, still holding the whip in his hand, whilst many of those individuals, who at a party quarrel or faction fight, in fair or market, were incapable of the slightest terror, now stood trembling before him, absolutely pale and breathless with fear.

"Come, Kelly," said he to one of them, "are you fully prepared for the two blessed sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, that you are about to receive? Can you read, sir?"

"Can I read, is id?—my *brother Barney* can, yer Rev'ence," replied Kelly, sensible, amid all the disadvantages around him, of the degradation of his ignorance.

"What's that to me, sir?" said the priest, "what your brother Barney can do—can you not read yourself?"

"I can not, yer Reverence," said Kelly, in a tone of regret.

"I hope you have your Christian Doctrine, at all events," said the priest. "Go on with the Confiteor."

Kelly went on—" *Confetur Dimniportenti batchy Mary sempur virginy, batchy Mickletos Archy Angelo, batchy Johnny Bartisty, sanctris postlis—Petrum hit Paulum, omnium sanctris, et tabby pasture, quay a pixavit minus coglety ashy hony verbum et offer him smazy quilta smazy quilta smazy maxin in quilta* *."

"Very well, Kelly, right enough, all except the pronounoing, which wouldn't pass muster in Maynooth, however. How many kinds of commandments are there?"

"Two, sir."

"What are they?"

"God's and the Church's."

"Repeat God's share of them."

He then repeated the first commandment according to *his* catechism.

"Very good, Kelly, very good. Well, now, repeat the commandments of the Church."

"First—Sundays and holidays, Mass thou shalt sartinly hear;

"Second—All holidays sanctificate throughout all the whole year.

"Third—Lent, Ember days, and Virgins, thou shalt be sartin to fast;

"Fourth—Fridays and Saturdays flesh thou shalt not, good, bad, or indifferent, taste.

"Fifth—In Lent and Advent, nuptial fastes gallantly forbear.

"Sixth—Confess your sins, at laste once decently and soberly every year.

"Seventh—Resave your God at confission about great Easter-day;

"Eighth—And to his church and his own frolicsome clargy neglect not tides (tithes) to pay."

"Well," said his Reverence, "now, the great point is, do you understand them?"

"Wid the help of God, I hope so, yer Rev'ence; and I have also the three thriptological vartues."

"Theological, sirrah!

"Theojollyological vartues; the four sins that cry to heaven for vengeance; the *five* carnal vartues—prudence, justice, ttemptation, and solitude†; the seven deadly sins; the eight grey attitudes——"

* We subjoin the original, for the information of our readers:—

"Confiteor Deo Omnipotenti, beate Mariæ, semper Virgini, beato Michaelo archangelo, beato Johanni Baptiste, sanctis Apostolis, Petro et Paulo, omnibus sanctis, et tibi, pater, quia, peccavi unius cogitatione, verbo, et opere, mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa." Let not our readers suppose that the above version in the mouth of a totally illiterate peasant is overcharged; for we have the advantage of remembering how we ourselves used to hear it pronounced in our early days. We will back the version in the text against Edward Irving's now language for any money.—*Original note.*

† Temperance and fortitude.

"Grey attitudes! Oh, the Bœotian!" exclaimed his Reverence—"listen to the way in which he's playing havoc among them. Stop, sir," for Kelly was going on at full speed—"Stop, sir. I tell you it's not *gray* attitudes, but *bay* attitudes—doesn't every one know the eight beatitudes?"

"The eight *bay* attitudes; the nine ways of being guilty of another's sins; the ten commandments; the twelve fruits of a Christian; the fourteen stations of the cross; the fifteen mysteries of the passion——"

"Kelly," said his Reverence, interrupting him, and heralding the joke, for so it was intended, with a hearty chuckle, "you're getting fast out of your *teens*, ma bouchal!" and this was, of course, honoured with a merry peal, extorted as much by an effort at softening the rigour of examination, as by the traditionary duty which entails upon the Irish laity the necessity of laughing at a priest's jokes, without any reference at all to their quality. Nor was his Reverence's own voice the first to subside into that gravity which became the solemnity of the occasion; for, even whilst he continued the interrogatories, his eye was laughing at the conceit with which it was evident the inner man was not competent to grapple. "Well, Kelly, I can't say but you've answered very well, as far as the *repeating* of them goes; but do you perfectly *understand* all the commandments of the church?"

"I do, Sir," replied Kelly, whose confidence kept pace with his Reverence's good humour.

"Well, what is meant by the fifth?"

"The fifth, sir?" said the other, rather confounded—"I must begin, sir, and go on till I come to it."

"Well," said the priest, "never mind that; but tell us what the eighth means?"

Kelly stared at him a second time, but was not able to advance "First—Sundays and holidays, mass thou shalt hear;" but before he had proceeded to the second, a person who stood at his elbow began to whisper to him the proper reply, and in the act of so doing received a lash of the whip across the ear for his pains.

"You blackguard you!" exclaimed Father Philemy, "take that—how dare you attempt to prompt any person that I'm examining?"

Those who stood around Kelly now fell back to a safe distance, and all was silence, terror, and trepidation once more.

"Come, Kelly, go on—the eighth?"

Kelly was still silent.

"Why, you ninny you, didn't you repeat it just now. 'Eighth—And to his church neglect not tithes to pay.' Now that I have put the words in your mouth, what does it mean?"

Kelly having thus got the cue, replied, in the words of the Catechism, "To pay *tithes* to the lawful *pasterns* of the church, sir."

"*Pasterns*!—oh, you ass you! *Pasterns*!—you poor, base, contemptible, crawling reptile, as if we trampled you under our hooves—oh, you scruff of the earth! Stop, I say—it's *pastors*."

"Pastures of the church."

"And, tell me, do you fulfil that commandment?"

"I do, sir."

"It's a lie, sir," replied the priest, brandishing the whip over his head, whilst Kelly instinctively threw up his guard to protect himself from the blow. "It's a lie, sir," repeated his Reverence; "you don't fulfil it. What is the church?"

"The church is the congregation of the faithful that purfiss the true faith, and are obadient to the Pope."

"And who do you pay your tithes to?"

"To the parson, sir."

"And, you poor varmint you! is *he* obadient to the Pope?"

Kelly only smiled at the want of comprehension which prevented him from seeing the thing according to the view which his Reverence took of it.

"Well, now," continued Father Philemy, "who are the *lawful* pastors of God's church?"

"You are, sir: and all our own priests."

"And who ought you to pay your tithes to?"

"To you, sir, in coorse; sure I always knew that, yer Rev'rence."

"And what's the reason, then, you don't pay them to me, instead of the parson?"

This was a puzzler to Kelly, who only knew his own side of the question. "You have me there, sir," he replied, with a grin.

"Because," said his Reverence, "the Protestants, for the present, have the law of the land on their side, and power over you to compel the payment of tithes to themselves; but we have right, justice, and the law of God on ours; and, if every thing was in its proper place, it is not to the *parsons* but to *us*, that you would pay them."

"Well, well, Sir," replied Kelly, who now experienced a community of feeling upon the subject with his Reverence, that instantly threw him into a familiarity of manner which he thought the point between them justified—"who knows, Sir?" said he with a knowing smile, "there's a good time coming, yer Rev'rence."

"Ay," said Father Philemy, "wait till we get once into the Big* House, and if we don't turn the scales—if the Established Church doesn't go down, why, it won't be our fault. Now, Kelly, all's right but the money—have you brought your dues?"

"Here it is, Sir," said Kelly, handing him his dues for the last year.

It is to be observed here, that, according as the penitents went to be examined, or to kneel down to confess, a certain sum was exacted from each, which varied according to the arrears that might have been due to the priest. Indeed, it is not unusual for the host and hostess, on these occasions, to be refused a participation in the sacrament, until they pay this money, notwithstanding the considerable expense they are put to in entertaining not only the clergy, but a certain number of their own friends and relations.

"Well, stand aside, I'll hear you first; and now come up here, you young gentleman, that laughed so heartily a while ago at my joke—ha, ha, ha!—come up here, child."

A lad now approached him, whose face, on a first view, had something

* Parliament. This was written before the passing of the Emancipation Bill.

simple and thoughtless in it, but in which, on a closer inspection, might be traced a lurking, sarcastic humour, of which his Reverence never dreamt.

"You're for confession, of course?" said the priest.

"Of course," said the lad, echoing him, and laying a stress upon the word, which did not much elevate the meaning of the compliance in general with the rite in question.

"Oh!" exclaimed the priest, recognizing him when he approached—"you are Dan Fagan's son, and designed for the church yourself; you are a good Latinist, for I remember examining you in Erasmus about two years ago—*Quomodo se habet corpus tuum, charum lignum sacerdotis?*"

"*Valde, Domine.*" replied the lad, "*Quomodo se habet anima tua, charum exemplar sacerdotage, et fulcrum robustissimum Ecclesie sacrosanctae.*"

"Very good, Harry," replied his Reverence, laughing—"stand aside; I'll hear you after Kelly."

He then called up a man with a long melancholy face, which he noticed before to have been proof against his joke, and after making two or three additional and fruitless experiments upon his gravity, he commenced a cross fire of peevish interrogatories, which would have excluded him from the "tribunal" on that occasion, were it not that the man was remarkably well prepared, and answered the priest's questions very pertinently.

This over, he repaired to his room, where the work of absolution commenced; and, as there was a considerable number to be rendered sinless before the hour of dinner, he contrived to un-sin them with an alacrity that was really surprising.

Immediately after the conversation already detailed between his Reverence and Phaddhy, the latter sought Katty, that he might communicate to her the unlucky oversight which they had committed, in neglecting to provide fresh meat and wine. "We'll be disgraced for ever," said Phaddhy, "without either a bit of mutton or a bottle of wine for the gentlemen, and that big thief Parrah More Slevin had both."

"And I hope," replied Katty, "that you're not so mane as to let any of that faction out-do you in *dacency*, the nagerly set? It was enough for them to bate us in the law-shoot about the horse, and not to have the laugh agin at us about this."

"Well, that same law-shoot is not over with them yet," said Phaddhy; "wait till the spring fair comes, and if I don't have a faction gathered that'll sweep them out of the town, why my name's not Phaddy! But where is Matt till we sind him off?"

"Arrah, Phaddhy," said Katty, "wasn't it friendly of Father Philemy to give us the *hard word* about the wine and mutton?"

"Very friendly," retorted Phaddy, who, after all, appeared to have suspected the priest—"very friendly, indeed, when it's to put a good joint before himself, and a bottle of wine in his jacket. No, no, Katty! it's not altogether for the sake of Father Philemy, but I wouldn't have the neighbours say that I was near and undacent; and above all things, I wouldn't be worse nor the Slevins—for the same set would keep it up agin us long enough."

Our readers will admire the tact with which Father Philemy worked

upon the rival feeling between the factions; but, independently of this, there is a generous hospitality in an Irish peasant which would urge him to any stratagem, were it even the disposal of his only cow, sooner than incur the imputation of a narrow, or, as he himself terms it, "undacent" or "nagerly" * spirit.

In the course of a short time, Phaddy dispatched two messengers, one for the wine, and another for the mutton; and, that they might not have cause for any unnecessary delay, he gave them the two reverend gentlemen's horses, ordering them to spare neither whip nor spur until they returned. This was an agreeable command to the messengers, who, as soon as they found themselves mounted, made a bet of a "trate," to be paid on arriving in the town to which they were sent, to him who should first reach a little stream that crossed the road at the entrance of it, called the "Pound burn." But I must not forget to state, that they not only were mounted on the priests' horses, but took their great-coats, as the day had changed, and threatened to rain. Accordingly, on getting out upon the main road, they set off, whip and spur, at full speed, jostling one another, and cutting each other's horses as if they had been intoxicated; and the fact is, that, owing to the liberal distribution of the bottle that morning they were not far from it.

"Bliss us!" exclaimed the country people, as they passed, "what on airth can be the mattier with Father Philemy and Father Con, that they're abusing wan another at sich a rate!"

"Oh!" exclaimed another, "it's apt to be a sick call, and they're thriving, may be, to be there before the body grows cowl'd."†

"Ay, or may be," a third conjectured, "it's to ould Magennis, that's on the point of death, and going to lave all his money behind him."

But their astonishment was not a whit lessened, when, in about an hour afterwards, they perceived them both return; the person who represented Father Con having an overgrown leg of mutton slung behind his back like an Irish harp, reckless of its friction against his Reverence's coat, which it had completely saturated with grease; and the duplicate of Father Philemy with a sack over his shoulder, in the bottom of which was half a dozen of Mr. M'Laughlin's best port.

Phaddy, in the meantime, being determined to mortify his rival Parrah More by a superior display of hospitality, waited upon that personage, and exacted a promise from him to come down and partake of the dinner—a promise which the other was not slack in fulfilling. Phaddy's heart was now on the point of taking its rest, when it occurred to him that there yet remained one circumstance in which he might utterly eclipse his rival, and that was to ask Captain Wilson, his landlord, to meet their Reverences at dinner. He accordingly went over to him, for he only lived a few fields distant, having first communicated the thing privately to Katty, and requested that, as their Reverences that day held a station

* Niggardly.

† In the Roman Catholic Church the priest is at liberty to administer the last rites, even so long as it is possible that the body and soul may not have finally separated. Under these circumstances, it occasionally happens that the Extreme Unction is administered *after* death, but still while the animal heat remains.

in his house, and would dine there, he would have the kindness to dine along with them. To this the Captain, who was intimate with both the clergymen, gave a ready compliance, and Phaddhy returned home in high spirits.

In the meantime, the two priests were busy in the work of absolution; the hour of three had arrived, and they had many to shrive; but, in the course of a short time, a reverend auxiliary made his appearance, accompanied by one of Father Philemy's nephews, who was then about to enter Maynooth. This clerical gentleman had been appointed to a parish; but, owing to some circumstances which were known only in the distant part of the diocese where he had resided, he was deprived of it, and had, at the period I am writing of, no appointment in the church, though he was in full orders. If I mistake not, he incurred his bishop's displeasure by being too warm an advocate for Domestic Nomination*, a piece of discipline, the re-establishment of which was then attempted by the junior clergymen of the diocese wherein the scene of this station is laid. Be this as it may, he came in time to assist the gentlemen in absolving those penitents (as we must call them so) who still remained unconfessed.

During all this time Katty was in the plenitude of her authority, and her sense of importance manifested itself in a manner that was by no means softened by having been that morning at her duty. Her tones were not so shrill, nor so loud as they would have been, had not their Reverences been within hearing; but what was wanting in loudness, was displayed in a firm and decided energy, that vented itself frequently in the course of the day upon the backs and heads of her sons, daughters, and servants, as they crossed her path in the impatience and bustle of her employment. It was truly ludicrous to see her, on encountering one of them in these fretful moments, give him a drive head-foremost against the wall, exclaiming, as she shook her fist at him, "Ho, you may bless your stars, that *they're* under the roof, or it wouldn't go so asy wid you; for if goodness hasn't said it, you'll make me lose my sowl this blessed and holy day: but this is still the case—the very time I go to my duty, the devil (between us and harm) is sure to throw fifty temptations across me, and to help him, you must come in my way—but wait till to-morrow, and if I don't pay you for this, I'm not here."

That a station is an expensive ordinance to the peasant who is honoured by having one held in his house, no one who knows the characteristic hospitality of the Irish people can doubt. I have reason, however, to know that, within the last few years, stations in every sense have been very much improved, where they have not been abolished altogether. The priests now are not permitted to dine in the houses of their parishioners, by which a heavy tax has been removed from the people.

About four o'clock the penitents were at length all dispatched; and those who were to be detained for dinner, many of whom had not eaten anything until then, in consequence of the necessity of receiving the Eucharist fasting, were taken aside to taste some of Phaddhy's poteen. At length the hour of dinner arrived, and along with it the redoubtable

* Domestic Nomination was the right claimed by a portion of the Irish clergy to appoint their own bishops, independently of the Pope.

Parral More Slevin, Captain Wilson, and another nephew of Father Philemy's, who had come to know what detained his brother who had conducted the auxiliary priest to Phaddy's. It is surprising on these occasions, to think how many uncles, and nephews, and cousins, to the forty-second degree, find it needful to follow their Reverences on messages of various kinds; and it is equally surprising to observe with what exactness they drop in during the hour of dinner. Of course, any blood-relation or friend of the priest's must be received with cordiality; and consequently they do not return without solid proofs of the good-natured hospitality of poor Paddy, who feels no greater pleasure than in showing his "dacency" to any one belonging to his Reverence.

I dare say it would be difficult to find a more motley and diversified company than sat down to the unadorned fare which Katty laid before them. There were first Fathers Philemy, Con, and the Auxiliary from the far part of the diocese; next followed Captain Wilson, Peter Malone, and Father Philemy's two nephews; after these came Phaddy himself, Parral More Slevin, with about two dozen more of the most remarkable and uncouth personages that could sit down to table. There were besides about a dozen of females, most of whom by this time, owing to Katty's private kindness, were in a placid state of feeling. Father Philemy, *ex officio*, filled the chair—he was a small man, with cherub cheeks as red as roses, black twinkling eyes, and double chin; was of the fat-headed genus, and, if phrenologists be correct, must have given indications of early piety, for he was bald before his time, and had the organ of veneration standing visible on his crown; his hair, from having once been black, had become an iron-grey, and hung down behind his ears, resting on the collar of his coat according to the old school, to which, I must remark, he belonged, having been educated on the Continent. His coat had large double breasts, the lappels of which hung down loosely on each side, being the prototype of his waistcoat, whose double breasts fell downwards in the same manner—his black small-clothes had silver buckles at the knees, and the gaiters, which did not reach up so far, discovered a pair of white lamb's-wool stockings, somewhat retreating from their original colour.

Father Con was a tall, muscular, able-bodied young man, with an immensely-broad pair of shoulders, of which he was vain; his black hair was cropped close, except a thin portion of it which was trimmed quite evenly across his eye-brows; he was rather bow-limbed, and when walking looked upwards, holding out his elbows from his body, and letting the lower parts of his arms fall down, so that he went as if he carried a keg under each; his coat, though not well made, was of the best glossy broad-cloth—and his long clerical boots went up about his knees like a dragoon's; there was an awkward stiffness about him, in very good keeping with a dark melancholy cast of countenance, in which, however, a man might discover an air of simplicity not to be found in the visage of his superior, Father Philemy.

The latter gentleman filled the chair, as I said, and carved the goose; on his right sat Captain Wilson; on his left, the auxiliary—next to them Father Con, the nephews, Peter Malone, *et cetera*. To enumerate the items of the dinner is unnecessary, as our readers have a pretty accurate notion of them from what we have already said. We can only ob-

serve, that when Phaddhy saw it laid, and all the wheels of the system fairly set a-going, he looked at Parrah More with an air of triumph which he could not conceal. It is also unnecessary for us to give the conversation in full; nor, indeed, would we attempt giving any portion of it, except for the purpose of showing the spirit in which a religious ceremony, such as it is, is too frequently closed.

The talk in the beginning was altogether confined to the clergyman and Mr. Wilson, including a few diffident contributions from "Pether Malone," and the "two nephews."

"Mr. M'Guirk," observed Captain Wilson, after the conversation had taken several turns, "I'm sure that in the course of your professional duties, sir, you must have had occasion to make many observations upon human nature, from the circumstance of seeing it in every condition and state of feeling possible; from the baptism of the infant, until the aged man receives the last rites of your church, and the soothing consolation of religion from your hand."

"Not a doubt of it, Phaddhy," said Father Philemy to Phaddhy, whom he had been addressing at the time, "not a doubt of it; and I'll do everything in my power to get him in* too, and I am told he is bright."

"Uncle," said one of the nephews, "this gentleman is speaking to you."

"And why not?" continued his Reverence, who was so closely engaged with Phaddhy, that he did not even hear the nephew's appeal—"a bishop—and why not? Has he not as good a chance of being a bishop as any of them? though, God knows, it is not always merit that gets a bishoprick in any church, or I myself might—but let *that* pass," said he, fixing his eyes on the bottle.

"Father Philemy," said Father Con, "Captain Wilson was addressing himself to you in a most especial manner."

"Oh! Captain, I beg ten thousand pardons, I was engaged talking with Phaddhy here about his son, who is a young shaving of our cloth, sir; he is intended for the Mission †—Phaddy, I will either examine him myself, or make Father Con examine him, by-and-by.—Well, Captain?"

The Captain now repeated what he had said.

"Very true, Captain, and we do see it in as many shapes as ever—Con, what do you call him?—put on him."

"Proteus," subjoined Con, who was famous at the classics.

Father Philemy nodded for the assistance, and continued—"but as for human nature, Captain, give it to me at a good rousing christening; or, what is better again, at a jovial wedding between two of my own parishioners—say this pretty fair-haired daughter of Phaddhy Sheemus Phaddhy's here, and long Ned Slevin, Parrah More's son there—eh Phaddy, will it be a match?—what do you say, Parrah More? Upon my veracity I must bring that about."

* That is—into Maynooth college—the great object of ambition to the son of an Irish peasant, or rather to his parent.

† The Church of Rome existing in any heretical country—that is, where she herself is not the state church—is considered a missionary establishment; and taking orders in her is termed "Going upon the Mission." Even Ireland is looked upon as *in partibus infidelium*, because Protestantism is established *by law*—hence the phrase above.

"Why, then, yer Reverence," replied Phaddhy, who was now a little softened, and forgot his enmity against Parrah More for the present, "unlikelier things might happen."

"It won't be my fault," said Parrah More, "if my son Ned has no objection."

"*He* object!" replied Father Philemy, "if *I* take it in hands, let me see who'll dare to object; doesn't the Scripture say it? and sure we can't go against the Scripture."

"By the by," said Captain Wilson, who was a dry humourist, "I am happy to be able to infer from what you say, Father Philemy, that you are not, as the clergymen of your church are supposed to be, inimical to the Bible."

"Me an enemy to the Bible! no such thing, Sir; but, Captain, begging your pardon, we'll have nothing more about the Bible: you see we are met here, as friends and good fellows, to enjoy ourselves after the severity of our spiritual duties, and we must relax a little; we can't always carry long faces like Methodist parsons—come, Parrah More, let the Bible take a nap, and give us a song."

His Reverence was now seconded in his motion by the most of all present, and Parrah More, accordingly gave them a song. After a few songs more, the conversation went on as before.

"Now, Parrah More," said Phaddhy, "you must try *my wine*; I hope it's as good as what *you* gave his Reverence yesterday."

The words, however, had scarcely passed his lips, when Father Philemy burst out into a fit of laughter, clapping and rubbing his hands in a manner the most irresistible. "Oh, Phaddhy, Phaddhy!" shouted his Reverence, laughing heartily, "*I done* you for once—I done you, my man, *cute* as you thought yourself: why, you nager you, did you think to put us off with punch, and you have a stocking of hard guineas hid in a hole in the wall?"

"What does yer Rev'ence mane," said Phaddhy; "for myself can make no understanding out of it, at all at all?"

To this his Reverence only replied by another laugh.

"*I* gave his Reverence no wine," said Parrah More, in reply to Phaddhy's question.

"What!" said Phaddhy, "none yesterday, at the station held with you?"

"Not a bit of me ever thought of it."

"Nor no mutton?"

"Why, then, devil a morsel of mutton, Phaddhy; but we had a rib of beef."

Phaddhy now looked over to his Reverence rather sheepishly, with the smile of a man on his face who felt himself foiled. "Well, yer Reverence *has done* me, sure enough," he replied, rubbing his head—"I give it up to you, Father Philemy; but any how, I'm glad I got it, and you're all welcome from the core of my heart. I'm only sorry I haven't as much more now to thrate you all like gentlemen; but there's some yet, and as much punch as will make all our heads come round."

Our readers must assist us with their own imaginations, and suppose

the conversation to have passed very pleasantly, and the night, as well as the guests, to be somewhat *far gone*. The principal part of the conversation was borne by the three clergymen, Captain Wilson, and Phaddhy; that of the two nephews and Peter Malone ran in an under current of its own; and in the preceding part of the night, those who occupied the bottom of the table, spoke to each other rather in whispers, being too much restrained by that rustic bashfulness which ties up the tongues of those who feel that their consequence is overlooked among their superiors. According as the punch circulated, however, their diffidence began to wear off; and occasionally an odd laugh or so might be heard to break the monotony of their silence. The youngsters too, though at first almost in a state of terror, soon commenced plucking each other; and a titter, or a suppressed burst of laughter, would break forth from one of the more waggish, who was put to a severe task in afterwards composing his countenance into sufficient gravity to escape detection, and a competent portion of chastisement the next day, for not being able to "behave himself with bettther manners."

During these juvenile breaches of decorum, Katty would raise her arm in a threatening attitude, shake her head at them, and look up at the clergy, intimating more by her earnestness of gesticulation than met the ear. Several songs again went round, of which, truth to tell, Father Philemy's were by far the best; for he possessed a rich, comic expression of eye, which, added to suitable ludicrousness of gesture, and a good voice, rendered him highly amusing to the company. Father Con declined singing, as being decidedly serious, though he was often solicited.

"He!" said Father Philemy, "he has no more voice than a wool-pack; but Con's a cunning fellow. What do you think, Captain Wilson, but he pretends to be too pious to sing, and gets credit for piety,—not because he is devout, but because he has a bad voice; now, Con, you can't deny it, for there's not a man in the three kingdoms knows it better than myself; you sit there with a face upon you that might go before the Lamentations of Jeremiah the Prophet, when you ought to be as jovial as another."

"Well, Father Philemy," said Phaddhy, "as he won't sing, may be, wid submission, he'd examine Briney in his Latin, till his mother and I hear how's he doing at it."

"Ay, he's fond of dabbling at Latin, so he may try him—I'm sure I have no objection——: so, Captain, as I was telling you——."

"Silence there below!" said Phaddhy to those at the lower end of the table, who were now talkative enough; "will yez whisht there till Father Con hears Briney a lesson in his Latin. Where are you, Briney? come here, ma bouchal."

But Briney had absconded when he saw that the tug of war was about to commence. In a few minutes, however, the father returned, pushing the boy before him, who, in his reluctance to encounter the ordeal of examination, clung to every chair, table, and person in his way, hoping that his restiveness might induce them to postpone the examination till another occasion. The father, however, was inexorable, and by main force dragged him from all his holds, and placed him before Father Con.



Monday entertaining the Priests.

The Revue, 1870, No. 1.

“What’s come over you, at all at all, you unsignified *shingason* you, to affront the gentleman in this way, and he kind enough to go for to give you an *examination*?—come now, you had better not vex me, I tell you, but hould up your head, and spake out loud, that we can all hear you: now, Father Con, achora, you’ll not be too hard upon him in the beginning, till he gets into it, for he’s aisy dashed.”

“Here, Briney,” said Father Philemy, handing him his tumbler, “take a pull of this, and if you have any courage at all in you it will raise it;—take a good pull.”

Briney hesitated.

“Why but you take the glass out of his Reverence’s hand, sarrah,” said the father—“what! is it without dhrinking his Reverence’s health first?”

Briney gave a most melancholy nod at his Reverence, as he put the tumbler to his mouth, which he nearly emptied, notwithstanding his shyness.

“For my part,” said his Reverence, looking at the almost empty tumbler, “I am pretty sure that that same chap will be able to take care of himself through life. And so, Captain, ——” said he, resuming the conversation with Captain Wilson—for his notice of Briney was only parenthetical.

Father Con now took the book, which was *Æsop’s Fables*, and, in accordance with Briney’s intention, it opened exactly at the favourite fable of *Gallus Gallinaceus*. He was not aware, however, that Briney had kept that place open during the preceding part of the week, in order to effect this point. Father Philemy, however, was now beginning to relate another anecdote to the Captain, and the thread of his narrative twined rather ludicrously with that of the examination.

Briney, after a few hems, at length proceeded—“*Gallus Gallinaceus*, a dunghill cock——”

“So, Captain, I was just after coming out of Widow Moylan’s—it was in the Lammas fair—and a large ono, by the by, it was—so, Sir, who should come up to me but Branagan. ‘Well, Branagan,’ said I, ‘how does the world go now with you?’——”

“*Gallus Gallinaceus*, a dunghill cock——”

—— “Says he. ‘And how is that?’ says I,——”

“*Gallus Gallinaceus*——”

—— “Says he, ‘Hut tut, Branagan,’ says I—‘you’re drunk.’ ‘That’s the thing, Sir,’ says Branagan, ‘and I want to explain it all to your Reverence.’ ‘Well,’ said I, ‘go on.’——”

“*Gallus Gallinaceus*, a dunghill cock——”

—— “Says he,——Let your *Gallus Gallinaceus* go to roost for this night, Con,” said Father Philemy, who did not relish the interruption of his story; “I say, Phaddhy, send the boy to bed, and bring him down in your hand to my house on Saturday morning, and we will both examine him, but this is no time for it, and me engaged in conversation with Captain Wilson.—So, Captain——‘Well, Sir,’ says Branagan, and he staggering, ‘I took an oath against liquor, and I want your Reverence to break it’ says he. ‘What do you mean?’ I enquired. ‘Why, please

your Reverence,' said he, 'I took an oath against liquor, as I told you, not to drink more nor a pint of whiskey in one day, and I want your Reverence to break it for me, and make it only half a pint; for I find that a pint is too much for me; by the same token, that when I get that far, your Reverence, I disremember the oath entirely.'

The influence of the bottle now began to be felt, and the conversation absolutely blew a gale, wherein hearty laughter, good strong singing, loud argument, and general good humour blended into one uproarious peal of hilarity, accompanied by some smart flashes of wit and humour which would not disgrace a prouder banquet. Phaddhy, in particular, melted into a spirit of the most unbounded benevolence—a spirit that would (if by any possible means he could effect it) embrace the whole human race; that is to say, he would raise them, man, woman, and child, to the same elevated state of happiness which he enjoyed himself. That, indeed, was happiness in perfection, as pure and unadulterated as the poteen which created it. How could he be otherwise than happy?—he had succeeded to a good property, and a stocking of hard guineas, without the hard labour of acquiring them; he had the "clergy" under his roof at last, partaking of a hospitality which he felt himself well able to afford them; he had settled with his Reverence for five years' arrears of sin, all of which had been wiped out of his conscience by the blessed absolving hand of the priest; he was training up Briney for the Mission, and though last, not least, he was—far gone in his seventh tumbler!

"Come, jinteels," said he, "spare nothing here—there's lashings of every thing; thrate yourselves dacent, and don't be saying to-morrow or next day, that ever my father's son was nagerly. Death alive, Father Con, what are you doin'? Why, then, bad manners to me if that'll sarve, any how."

"Phaddhy," replied Father Con, "I assure you I have done my duty."

"Very well, Father Con, granting all that, it's no sin to repate a good turn you know. Not a word I'll hear, yer Reverence—one tumbler along with myself, if it was only for ould times." He then filled Father Con's tumbler, with his own hand, in a truly liberal spirit. "Arrah Father Con, do you remember the day we had the leapin'-match, and the bout at the shoulder-stone?"

"Indeed, I'll not forget it, Phaddhy."

"And it's yourself that may say that; but I bleeve I rubbed the con-sate off of your Reverence—only that's betune ourselves, you persave."

"You did win the palm, Phaddhy, I'll not deny it; but you are the only man that ever *bet* me at either of the athletics."

"And I'll say this for yer Reverence, that you are one of the best and most able-bodied gintlemen I ever engaged with. Ah! Father Con, I'm past all that now—but no matter, here's yer Reverence's health, and a shake hands; Father Philemy, yer health, docthor: yer strange Reverence's health—Captain Wilson, not forgetting you, Sir: Mr. Pether, yours; and I hope to see you soon with the robes upon you, and to be able to prache us a good sarmon. Parrah More—*wus dha laus* givo me yer*

* The translation follows it.

hand, you steeple you ; and I hav'nt the smallest taste of objection to what Father Philemy hinted at—ye'll observe. Katty, you thief of the world, where are you ? Your health, avourneen ; come here, and give us your fist, Katty : bad manners to me if I could forget you ather all ;—the best crathur, your Reverence, under the sun, except when yer Reverence puts yer *comadher* on her at confession, and then she's a little sharp or so, not a doubt of it : but no matter, Katty ahagur, you do it all for the best. And Father Philemy, maybe it's myself didn't put the thrick upon you in the Maragy More, about Katty's death—ha, ha, ha ! Jack M'Craner, yer health—all yer healths, and yer welcome here, if you war seven times as many. Briney, where are you, ma bouchal ? Come up and shake hands wid yer father, as well as another—come up, acushla, and kiss me. Ah, Briney, my poor fellow, ye'll never be the cut of a man yer father was ; but no matter, avourneen, ye'll be a betther man, I hope ; and God knows you may asy be that, for Father Philemy, I'm not what I ought to be, yer Reverence ; however, I may mend, and will, maybe, before a month of Sundays goes over me : but, for all that, Briney, I hope to see the day when you'll be sitting an ordained priest, at my own table ; if I once saw that, I could die contented—so mind yer larning, acushla, and his Reverence here will back you, and make intherest to get you into the college. Musha, God pity them crathurs at the door—aren't they gone yet ? Listen to them coughin', for fraid we'd forget them : and throth and they won't be forgot this bout any how—Katty, avourneen, give them every one, big and little, young and ould, their skinfull—don't lave a wrinkle in them ; and see, take one of them bottles—the crathurs, they're starved sitting there all night in the coud—and give them a couple of glasses a-piece—it's good, yer Reverence, to have the poor body's blessing at all times ; and now as I was saying, Here's all yer healths ! *and from the very veins of my heart yer welcome here.*"

Our readers may perceive that Phaddhy

" Was not only blest, but glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious ;"

for, like the generality of our peasantry, the *native* drew to the surface of his character those warm, hospitable, and benevolent virtues, which a purer system of morals and education would most certainly keep in full action, without running the risk, as in the present instance, of mixing bad habits with frank, manly, and generous qualities.

* * * * *

" I'll not go, Con—I tell you I'll not go till I sing another song. Phaddhy, you're a prince—but where's the use of lighting more candles now, man, than you had in the beginning of the night ? Is Captain Wilson gone ? Then, peace be with him ; it's a pity he wasn't on the right side, for he's not the worst of them. Phaddhy, where are you ?

" Why, yer Reverence," replied Katty, " he's got a little unwell, and 'ist laid down his head a bit."

" Katty," said Father Con, " you had better get a couple of the men to accompany Father Philemy home ; for though the night's clear, he

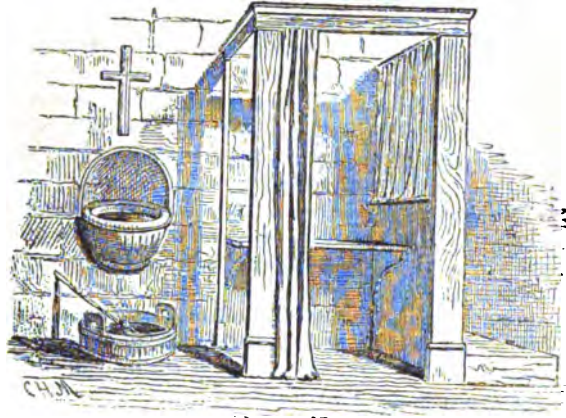
doesn't see his way very well in the dark—poor man, his eye-sight's failing him fast."

"Then, the more's the pity, Father Con. Here, Denis, let yourself and Mat go home wid Father Philemy."

"Good night, Katty," said Father Con—"Good night: and may our blessing *sanctify* you all."

"Good night, Father Con, ahagur," replied Katty; "and for goodness' sake see that they take care of Father Philemy, for it's himself that's the blessed and holy crathur, and the pleasant gintleman out and out."

"Good night, Katty," again repeated Father Con, as the cavalcade proceeded in a body—"Good night!" And so ended the Station.





THE PARTY FIGHT AND FUNERAL.

WE ought, perhaps, to inform our readers that the connection between a party fight and funeral is sufficiently strong to justify the author in classing them under the title which is prefixed to this story. The one being usually the natural result of the other, is made to proceed from it, as is, unhappily, too often the custom in real life among the Irish.

It has been long laid down as a universal principle, that self-preservation is the first law of nature. An Irishman, however, has nothing to do with this; he disposes of it as he does with the other laws, and washes his hands out of it altogether. But commend him to a fair, dance, funeral, or wedding, or to any other sport where there is a likelihood of getting his head or his bones broken, and if he survive, he will remember you with a kindness peculiar to himself, to the last day of his life—will drub you from head to heel if he finds that any misfortune has kept you out of a row beyond the usual period of three months—will render the same service to any of your friends that stand in need of it; or, in short, will go to the world's end, or fifty miles farther, as he himself would say, to serve you, provided you can procure him a bit of decent fighting. Now, in truth and soberness, it is difficult to account for this propensity; especially when the task of ascertaining it is assigned to those of another country, or even to those Irishmen whose rank in life places them too far

from the customs, prejudices, and domestic opinions of their native peasantry, none of which can be properly known without mingling with them. To my own knowledge, however, it proceeds in a great measure from *education*. And here I would beg leave to point out an omission of which the several boards of education have been guilty, and which, I believe, no one but myself has yet been sufficiently acute and philosophical to ascertain, as forming a *sine qua non* in the national instruction of the lower orders of Irishmen.

The cream of the matter is this:—a species of ambition prevails in the Green Isle, not known in any other country. It is an ambition of about three miles by four in extent; or, in other words, is bounded by the limits of the parish in which the subject of it may reside. It puts itself forth early in the character, and a hardy perennial it is. In my own case, its first development was noticed in the hedge-school which I attended. I had not been long there, till I was forced to declare myself either for the Caseys or the Murphys, two tiny factions, that had split the school between them. The day on which the ceremony of my declaration took place was a solemn one. After school, we all went to the bottom of a deep valley, a short distance from the school-house; up to the moment of our assembling there, I had not taken my stand under either banner: that of the Caseys was a sod of turf, stuck on the end of a broken fishing-rod—the eagle of the Murphys was a Cork red potato, hoisted in the same manner. The turf was borne by an urchin, who afterwards distinguished himself in fairs and markets as a *builla battah** of the first grade, and from this circumstance he was nicknamed *Parrak Rackhan*.† The potato was borne by little Mickle M'Phauden Murphy, who afterwards took away Katty Bane Sheridan, without asking either her own consent or her father's. They were all then boys, it is true, but they gave a tolerable promise of that eminence which they subsequently attained.

When we arrived at the bottom of the glen, the Murphys and the Caseys, including their respective followers, ranged themselves on either side of a long line, which was drawn between the belligerent powers with the butt-end of one of the standards. Exactly on this line was I placed. The word was then put to me in full form—"Whether will you side with the dacent Caseys, or the blackguard Murphys?" "Whether will you side with the dacent Murphys, or the blackguard Caseys?" "The potato for ever!" said I, throwing up my caubeen, and running over to the Murphy standard. In the twinkling of an eye we were at it; and in a short time the deuce an eye some of us had to twinkle. A battle royal succeeded, that lasted near half an hour, and it would probably have lasted above double the time, were it not for the appearance of the "master," who was seen by a little shrivelled *vidotta*, who wanted an arm, and could take no part in the engagement. This was enough—we instantly radiated in all possible directions, so that by the time he had descended through the intricacies of the glen to the field of battle, neither victor nor vanquished was visible, except, perhaps, a straggler or two as they topped the brow of the declivity, looking back over their shoulders,

* Cudgel-player.

† Paddy the Rioter.

to put themselves out of doubt as to their visibility by the master. They seldom looked in vain, however, for there he usually stood, shaking up his rod, silently prophetic of its application on the following day. This threat, for the most part, ended in smoke; for except he horsed about forty or fifty of us, the infliction of impartial justice was utterly out of his power.

But besides this, there never was a realm in which the evils of a divided cabinet were more visible: the truth is, the monarch himself was under the influence of female government—an influence which he felt it either contrary to his inclination, or beyond his power to throw off. Poor Norah, long may *you reign!*" we often used to exclaim, to the visible mortification of the "master," who felt the benevolence of the wish bottomed upon an indirect want of allegiance to himself. Well, it was a *touching* scene!—how we used to stand with the waistbands of our small-clothes cautiously grasped in our hands, with a timid show of resistance, our brave red faces slobbered over with tears, as we stood marked for execution! Never was there a finer specimen of deprecation in eloquence than we then exhibited—the supplicating look right up into the master's face—the touching modulation of the whine—the additional tightness and caution with which we grasped the waistbands with one hand, when it was necessary to use the other in wiping our eyes and noses with the polished sleeve-cuff—the sincerity and vehemence with which we promised never to be guilty again, still shrewdly including the condition of present impunity, for our offence:—"this—one—time—master, if ye please, sir;" and the utter hopelessness and despair which were legible in the last groan, as we grasped the "master's" leg in utter recklessness of judgment, were all perfect in their way. Reader, have you ever got a reprieve from the gallows? I beg pardon, my dear sir; I only meant to ask, are you capable of entering into what a personage of that description might be supposed to feel, on being informed, after the knot had been neatly tied under the left ear, and the cap drawn over his eyes, that her majesty had granted him a full pardon? But you remember your own schoolboy days, and that's enough.

The nice discrimination with which Norah used to time her interference was indeed surprising. God help us! limited was our experience, and shallow our little judgments, or we might have known what the master meant, when with the upraised arm hung over us, his eye was fixed upon the door of the kitchen, waiting for Norah's appearance.

Long, my fair and virtuous countrywomen, I repeat it to you all, as I did to Norah—may you reign in the hearts and affections of your husbands, (but no where else), the grace, ornaments, and happiness of their hearths and lives, you jewels, you! You are paragons of all that's good, and your feelings are highly creditable to yourselves and to humanity.

When Norah advanced, with her brawny uplifted arm, (for she was a powerful woman,) and forbidding aspect, to interpose between us and the avenging terrors of the birch, do you think that she did not reflect honour on her sex and the national character? I sink the base allusion to the *miscan** of fresh butter, which we had placed in her hands that morning, or the dish of eggs, or of meal, which we had either begged or stolen at

* A portion of butter, weighing from one pound to six or eight, made in the shape of a prism.

home, as a present for her; disclaiming, at the same time, the rascally idea of giving it as a bribe or from any motive beneath the most lofty-minded and disinterested generosity on our part.

Then again, never did a forbidding face shine with so winning and amicable an expression as did hers on that merciful occasion. The sun dancing a hornpipe on Easter Sunday morning, or the full moon sailing as proud as a peacock in a new halo head-dress, was a very disrespectable sight, compared to Norah's red beaming face, shrouded in her dowl cap with long ears, that descended to her masculine and substantial neck. Owing to her influence, the whole economy of the school was good; for we were permitted to cuff one another, and do whatever we pleased, with impunity, if we brought the meal, eggs, or butter; except some scapegoat who was not able to accomplish this, and he generally received on his own miserable carcass what was due to us all.

Poor Jack Murray! His last words on the scaffold, for being concerned in the murder of Pierce the guager, were, that he got the first of his bad habits under Pat Mulligan and Norah—that he learned to steal by secreting at home, butter and meal to paste up the master's eyes to his bad conduct—and that his fondness for quarrelling arose from being permitted to head a faction at school; a most ungrateful return for the many acts of grace which the indulgence of Norah caused to be issued in his favour.

I was but a short time under Pat, when, after the general example, I had my cudgel, which I used to carry regularly to a certain furze bush within fifty perches of the "seminary," where I hid it till after "dismiss." I grant it does not look well in me to become my own panegyrist; but I can at least declare, that there were few among the Caseys able to resist the prowess of this right arm, puny as it was at the period in question. Our battles were obstinate and frequent; but as the quarrels of the two families and their relations on each side were as bitter and pugnacious in fairs and markets as ours were in school, we hit upon the plan of holding our Lilliputian engagements upon the same days on which our fathers and brothers contested. According to this plan, it very often happened that the corresponding parties were successful, and as frequently, that whilst the Caseys were well drubbed in the fair, their sons were victorious at school, and *vice versa*.

For my part, I was early trained to cudgelling, and before I reached my fourteenth year, could pronounce as sage and accurate an opinion upon the merits of a *shillelagh*, as it is called, or cudgel, as a veteran of sixty could at first sight. Our plan of preparing them was this: we sallied out to any place where there was an underwood of blackthorn or oak, and, having surveyed the premises with the eye of a connoisseur, we selected the straightest root-growing piece which we could find: for if not root-growing, we did not consider it worth cutting, knowing from experience that a mere branch, how straight and fair soever it might look, would be apt to snap in the twist and tug of war. Having cut it as close to the root as possible, we then lopped off the branches, and put it up in the chimney to season. When seasoned, we took it down, and wrapping it in brown paper, well steeped in hog's lard or oil, we buried it in a horse dunghill, paying it a daily visit for the purpose of making it straight by

doubling back the bends or angles across the knee, in a direction contrary to their natural tendency. Having daily repeated this until we had made it straight, and renewed the oiled wrapping paper until the staff was perfectly saturated, we then rubbed it well with a woollen cloth, containing a little black-lead and grease, to give it a polish. This was the last process, except that, if we thought it too light at the top, we used to bore a hole in the lower end with a red-hot iron spindle, into which we poured melted lead, for the purpose of giving it the knock-down weight.

There were very few of Paddy Mulligan's scholars without a choice collection of such cudgels, and scarcely one who had not, before his fifteenth year, a just claim to be called the hero of a hundred fights, and the heritor of as many bumps on the cranium as would strike both Gall and Spurzheim speechless.

Now this, be it known, was, and in some districts yet is, an integral part of an Irish peasant's *education*. In the northern parts of Ireland, where the population of the Catholics on the one side, and of Protestants and Dissenters on the other, is nearly equal, I have known the respective scholars of Catholic and Protestant schools to challenge each other, and meet half-way to do battle, in vindication of their respective creeds; or for the purpose of establishing the character of their respective masters as the more learned man; for if we were to judge by the nature of the education then received, we would be led to conclude that a more commercial nation than Ireland was not on the face of the earth, it being the indispensable part of every scholar's business to become acquainted with the *three sets of Book-keeping*.

The boy who was the handiest and the most daring with the cudgel at Paddy Mulligan's school was Denis Kelly, the son of a wealthy farmer in the neighbourhood. He was a rash, hot-tempered, good-natured lad, possessing a more than common share of this blackthorn ambition; on which account he was cherished by his relations as a boy that was likely at a future period to be able to walk over the course of the parish, in fair, market, or patron. He certainly grew up a stout, able, young fellow; and before he reached nineteen years, was unrivalled at the popular exercises of the peasantry. Shortly after that time he made his *début* in a party-quarrel, which took place in one of the Christmas *Marygones**, and fully sustained the anticipations which were formed of him by his relations. For a year or two afterwards no quarrel was fought without him; and his prowess rose until he had gained the very pinnacle of that ambition which he had determined to reach. About this time I was separated from him, having found it necessary, in order to accomplish my objects in life, to reside with a relation in another part of the country.

The period of my absence, I believe, was about fifteen years, during which space I heard no account of him whatsoever. At length, however, that inextinguishable attachment which turns the affections and memory to the friends of our early days—to those scenes which we traversed when the heart was light and the spirits buoyant—determined me to make a visit to my native place, that I might witness the progress of time and

* Big markets.

care upon those faces that were once so familiar to me; that I might again look upon the meadows, and valleys, and groves, and mountains, where I had so often played, and to which I still found myself bound by a tie that a more enlightened view of life and nature only made stronger and more enduring. I accordingly set off, and arrived late in the evening of a December day, at a little town within a few miles of my native home. On alighting from the coach and dining, I determined to walk home, as it was a fine frosty night. The full moon hung in the blue unclouded firmament in all her lustre, and the stars shone out with that tremulous twinkling motion, so peculiarly remarkable in frost. I had been absent, I said, about fifteen years, and felt that the enjoyment of this night would form an era in the records of my memory and my feelings. I find myself indeed utterly incapable of expressing what I experienced; but those who have ever been in similar circumstances will understand what I mean. A strong spirit of practical poetry and romance was upon me; and I thought that a common-place approach in the open day would have rendered my return to the scenes of my early life a very stale and unedifying matter.

I left the inn at seven o'clock, and as I had only five miles to walk, I would just arrive about nine, allowing myself to saunter on at the rate of two miles and a half per hour. My sensations, indeed, as I went along, were singular; and as I took a solitary road that went across the mountains, the loneliness of the walk, the deep gloom of the valleys, the towering height of the dark hills, and the pale silvery light of a sleeping lake, shining dimly in the distance below, gave me such a distinct notion of the sublime and beautiful, as I have seldom since experienced. I recommend every man who has been fifteen years absent from his native fields to return by moonlight.

Well, there is a mystery yet undiscovered in our being, for no man can know the full extent of his feelings or his capacities. Many a slumbering thought, and sentiment, and association reposes within him, of which he is utterly ignorant, and which, except he come in contact with those objects whose influence over his mind can alone call them into being, may never be awakened, or give him one moment of either pleasure or pain. There is, therefore, a great deal in the position which we hold in society, and simply in situation. I felt this on *that* night: for the tenor of my reflections was new and original, and my feelings had a warmth and freshness in them, which nothing but the situation in which I then found myself could give them. The force of association, too, was powerful; for as I advanced nearer home, the names of hills, and lakes, and mountains, that I had utterly forgotten, as I thought, were distinctly revived in my memory; and a crowd of youthful thoughts and feelings, that I imagined my intercourse with the world and the finger of time had blotted out of my being, began to crowd afresh on my fancy. The name of a townland would instantly return with its appearance; and I could now remember the history of families and individuals that had long been effaced from my recollection.

But what is even more singular is, that the superstitious terrors of my boyhood began to come over me as formerly, whenever a spot noted for supernatural appearances met my eye. It was in vain that I exerted myself to expel them, by throwing the barrier of philosophic reasoning

in their way ; they still clung to me, in spite of every effort to the contrary. But the fact is, that I was, for the moment, the slave of a morbid and feverish sentiment, that left me completely at the mercy of the dark and fleeting images that passed over my fancy. I now came to a turn where the road began to slope down into the depths of a valley that ran across it. When I looked forward into the bottom of it, all was darkness impenetrable, for the moon-beams were thrown off by the height of the mountains that rose on each side of it. I felt an indefinite sensation of fear, because at that moment I recollected that it had been, in my younger days, notorious as the scene of an apparition, where the spirit of a murdered pedlar had never been known to permit a solitary traveller to pass without appearing to him, and walking cheek-by-jowl along with him to the next house on the way, at which spot he usually vanished. The influence of my feelings, or, I should rather say, the physical excitement of my nerves, was by no means slight, as these old traditions recurred to me ; although, at the same time, my moral courage was perfectly unimpaired, so that, notwithstanding this involuntary apprehension, I felt a degree of novelty and curiosity in descending the valley : " If it appear," said I, " I shall at least satisfy myself as to the truth of apparitions."

My dress consisted of a long, dark surtout, the collar of which, as the night was keen, I had turned up about my ears, and the corners of it met round my face. In addition to this I had a black silk handkerchief tied across my mouth to keep out the night air, so that, as my dark fur travelling cap came down over my face, there was very little of my countenance visible. I now had advanced half way into the valley, and all about me was dark and still : the moonlight was not nearer than the top of the hill which I was descending ; and I often turned round to look upon it, so silvery and beautiful it appeared in the distance. Sometimes I stopped for a few moments, admiring its effect, and contemplating the dark mountains as they stood out against the firmament, then kindled into magnificent grandeur by the myriads of stars that glowed in its expanse. There was perfect silence and solitude around me ; and, as I stood alone in the dark chamber of the mountains, I felt the impressiveness of the situation gradually supersede my terrors. A sublime sense of religious awe descended on me ; my soul kindled into a glow of solemn and elevated devotion, which gave me a more intense perception of the presence of God than I had ever before experienced. " How sacred—how awful," thought I, " is this place !—how impressive is this hour !—surely I feel myself at the footstool of God ! The voice of worship is in this deep, soul-thrilling silence, and the tongue of praise speaks, as it were, from the very solitude of the mountains !" I then thought of Him who went up into a mountain-top to pray, and felt the majesty of those admirable descriptions of the Almighty, given in the Old Testament, blend in delightful harmony with the beauty and fitness of the Christian dispensation, that brought life and immortality to light. " Here," said I, " do I feel that I am indeed immortal, and destined for scenes of a more exalted and comprehensive existence !"

I then proceeded further into the valley, completely freed from the influence of old and superstitious associations. A few perches below me

a small river crossed the road, over which was thrown a little stone bridge of rude workmanship. This bridge was the spot on which the apparition was said to appear; and as I approached it, I felt the folly of those terrors which had only a few minutes before beset me so strongly. I found my moral energies recruited, and the dark phantasms of my imagination dispelled by the light of religion, which had refreshed me with a deep sense of the Almighty presence. I accordingly walked forward, scarcely bestowing a thought upon the history of the place, and had got within a few yards of the bridge, when on resting my eye accidentally upon the little elevation formed by its rude arch, I perceived a black coffin placed at the edge of the road, exactly upon the bridge itself!

It may be evident to the reader, that, however satisfactory the force of philosophical reasoning might have been upon the subject of the solitude, I was too much the creature of sensation for an hour before, to look on such a startling object with firm nerves. For the first two or three minutes, therefore, I exhibited as finished a specimen of the dastardly, as could be imagined. My hair absolutely raised my cap some inches off my head; my mouth opened to an extent which I did not conceive it could possibly reach; I thought my eyes shot out from their sockets, and my fingers spread out and became stiff, though powerless. The "*obstupui*" was perfectly realized in me, for, with the exception of a single groan, which I gave on first seeing the object, I found that if one word would save my life, or transport me to my own fire-side, I could not utter it. I was also rooted to the earth, as if by magic; and although instant tergiversation and flight had my most hearty concurrence, I could not move a limb, nor even raise my eyes off the sepulchral-looking object which lay before me. I now felt the perspiration fall from my face in torrents, and the strokes of my heart fell audibly on my ear. I even attempted to say "God preserve me!" but my tongue was dumb and powerless, and could not move. My eye was still upon the coffin, when I perceived that, from being motionless, it instantly began to swing,—first in a lateral, then in a longitudinal direction, although it was perfectly evident that no human hand was nearer it than my own. At length I raised my eyes off it, for my vision was strained to an aching intensity, which I thought must have occasioned my eye-strings to crack. I looked instinctively about me for assistance—but all was dismal, silent, and solitary: even the moon had disappeared among a few clouds that I had not noticed in the sky.

As I stood in this state of indescribable horror, I saw the light gradually fade away from the tops of the mountains, giving the scene around me a dim and spectral ghastliness, which to those who were never in such a situation, is altogether inconceivable.

At length I thought I heard a noise as it were of a rushing tempest, sweeping from the hills down into the valley; but on looking up, I could perceive nothing but the dusky desolation that brooded over the place. Still the noise continued; again I saw the coffin move; I then felt the motion communicated to myself, and found my body borne and swung backwards and forwards, precisely according to the motion of the coffin. I again attempted to utter a cry for assistance, but could not: the motion in my body still continued, as did the approaching noise in the hills.

I looked up a second time in the direction in which the valley wound off between them, but, judge of what I must have suffered, when I beheld one of the mountains moving, as it were, from its base, and tumbling down towards the spot on which I stood! In the twinkling of an eye the whole scene, hills and all, began to tremble, to vibrate, and to fly round me, with a rapid, delirious motion; the stars shot back into the depths of heaven, and disappeared; the ground on which I stood began to pass from beneath my feet; a noise like the breaking of a thousand gigantic billows again burst from every direction, and I found myself instantly overwhelmed by some deadly weight, which prostrated me on the earth, and deprived me of sense and motion.

I know not how long I continued in this state; but I remember that, on opening my eyes, the first object that presented itself to me, was the sky glowing as before with ten thousand stars, and the moon walking in her unclouded brightness through the heavens. The whole circumstance then rushed back upon my mind, but with a sense of horror very much diminished; I arose, and on looking towards the spot, perceived the coffin in the same place. I then stood, and endeavouring to collect myself, viewed it as calmly as possible; it was, however, as motionless and distinct as when I first saw it. I now began to reason upon the matter, and to consider that it was pusillanimous in me to give way to such boyish terrors. The confidence, also, which my heart, only a short time before this, had experienced in the presence and protection of the Almighty, again returned, and, along with it, a degree of religious fortitude, which invigorated my whole system. "Well," thought I, "in the name of God I shall ascertain what you are, let the consequence be what it may." I then advanced until I stood exactly over it, and raising my foot gave it a slight kick. "Now," said I, "nothing remains but to ascertain whether it contains a dead body or not;" but on raising the end of it, I perceived by its lightness, that it was empty. To investigate the cause of its being left in this solitary spot was, however, not within the compass of my philosophy, so I gave that up. On looking at it more closely, I noticed a plate, marked with the name and age of the person for whom it was intended, and on bringing my eyes near the letters, I was able, between fingering and reading, to make out the name of my old cudgel-fighting school-fellow, Denis Kelly.

This discovery threw a partial light upon the business; but I now remembered to have heard of individuals who had seen black, unearthly coffins, inscribed with the names of certain living persons; and that these were considered as ominous of the death of those persons. I accordingly determined to be certain that this was a real coffin; and as Denis's house was not more than a mile before me, I decided on carrying it that far: "If he be dead," thought I, "it will be all right, and if not, we will see more about it." My mind, in fact, was diseased by terror. I instantly raised the coffin, and as I found a rope lying on the ground under it, I strapped it about my shoulders and proceeded: nor could I help smiling when I reflected upon the singular transition which the man of sentiment and sensation so strangely underwent;—from the sublime contemplation of the silent mountain solitude and the spangled heavens

to the task of carrying a coffin! It was an adventure, however, and I was resolved to see how it would terminate.

There was from the bridge an ascent in the road, not so gradual as that by which I descended on the other side; and as the coffin was rather heavy, I began to repent of having anything to do with it; for I was by no means experienced in carrying coffins. The carriage of it was, indeed, altogether an irksome and unpleasant concern; for owing to my ignorance of using the rope that tied it skilfully, it was every moment sliding down my back, dragging along the stones, or bumping against my heels: besides, I saw no sufficient grounds I had for entering upon the ludicrous and odd employment of carrying another man's coffin, and was several times upon the point of washing my hands out of it altogether. But the novelty of the incident, and the mystery in which it was involved, decided me in bringing it as far as Kelly's house, which was exactly on my way home.

I had yet half a mile to go; but I thought it would be best to strap it more firmly about my body before I could start again: I therefore set it standing on its end, just at the turn of the road, until I should breathe a little, for I was rather exhausted by a trudge under it of half a mile and upwards. Whilst the coffin was in this position, I standing exactly behind it (Kelly had been a tall man, consequently it was somewhat higher than I was), a crowd of people, bearing lights, advanced round the corner; and the first object which presented itself to their vision, was the coffin in that position, whilst I was totally invisible behind it. As soon as they saw it, there was an involuntary cry of consternation from the whole crowd; at this time I had the coffin once more strapped firmly by a running knot to my shoulders, so that I could loose it whenever I pleased. On seeing the party, and hearing certain expressions which dropped from them, I knew at once that there had been some unlucky blunder in the business on their part; and I would have given a good deal to be out of the circumstances in which I then stood. I felt that I could not possibly have accounted for my situation, without bringing myself in for as respectable a portion of rank cowardice as those who ran away from the coffin; for that it was left behind in a fit of terror, I now entertained no doubt whatever, particularly when I remembered the traditions connected with the spot in which I found it.

"*Manim a Yea agus a wurrah!*"* exclaimed one of them, "if the black man hasn't brought it up from the bridge! *Dher a larna keena* †, he did; for it was above the bridge we first seen him: jist for all the world—the Lord be about us—as Antony and me war coming out on the road at the bridge, there he was standing—a headless man, all black, widout face or eyes upon him—and then we left the coffin and cut across the fields home."

"But where is he now, Eman?" said one of them, "are you sure you seen him?"

"Seen him!" both exclaimed, "do you think we'd take to our scrapers like two hares, only we did; arrah, bad mauners to you, do you think

* My soul to God and the Virgin.

† By the *very* book—meaning the Bible, which, in the Irish, is not simply called *the* book, but the *very* book, or the book *itself*.

the coffin could walk up wid itself from the bridge to this, only he brought it?—isn't that enough?"

"Thru for yez," the rest exclaimed, "but what's to be done?"

"Why to bring the coffin home, now that we're all together," another observed; "they say he never appears to more than two at wanst, so he won't be apt to show himself now, when we're together."

"Well, boys, let two of you go down to it," said one of them, "and we'll wait here till yez bring it up."

"Yes," said Eman Dhu, "do you go down, Owen, as you have the Scapular * on you, and the jug of holy water in your hand, and let Billy M'Shane, here, repate the *confesthur* † along wid you."

"Isn't it the same thing, Eman," replied Owen, "if I shake the holy water on you, and whoever goes wid you? sure you know that if only one dhrop of it touched you, the devil himself couldn't harm you!"

"And what needs yourself be afraid, then," retorted Eman; "and you has the Scapular on you to the back of that? Didn't you say, as you war coming out, that if it *was* the devil, you'd disperse him?"

"You had betther not be mintioning his name, you *omadhaun*," replied the other; "if I was your age, and hadn't a wife and childre on my hands, it's myself that would trust in God, and go down manfully; but the people are hen-hearted now, besides what they used to be in my time."

During this conversation, I had resolved, if possible, to keep up the delusion, until I could get myself extricated with due secrecy out of this ridiculous situation; and I was glad to find that, owing to their cowardice, there was some likelihood of effecting my design.

"Ned," said one of them to a little man, "go down and speak to it, as it can't harm *you*."

"Why, sure," said Ned, with a tremour in his voice, "I can speak to it where I am, widout going within rache of it. Boys, stay close to me: hem—In the name of—but don't you think I had betther spake to it in the Latin I *serve mass* ‡ wid; it can't but answer that, for the *soul* of it, seeing it's a blest language?"

"Very well," the rest replied; "try that, Ned; give it the best and ginteelest grammar you have, and maybe it may thrate us dacent."

Now it so happened that, in my school-boy days, I had joined a class of young fellows who were learning what is called the "*Sarvin' of Mass*," and had impressed it so accurately on a pretty retentive memory, that I never forgot it. At length, Ned pulled out his beads, and bedewed himself most copiously with the holy water. He then shouted out, with a voice which resembled that of a man in an ague fit, "*Dom-i-n-us vo-bis-cum?*" "*Et cum spiritu tuo*," I replied, in a husky sepulchral tone, from behind the coffin. As soon as I uttered these words, the whole

* The scapular is one of the highest religious orders, and is worn by both priest and layman. It is considered by the people a safeguard against evil, both spiritual and physical.

† The *Confiteor* is a prayer, or rather a general confession of sin, said by the penitent on going to confess his offences to the priest. It will be found at full length in "The Station."

‡ The person who serves mass, as it is called, is he who makes the responses to the priest during that ceremony. As the mass is said in Latin the serving of it must necessarily fall upon many who are ignorant of that language, and whose pronunciation of it is, of course, extremely ludicrous.

crowd ran back instinctively with fright; and Ned got so weak, that they were obliged to support him.

"Lord have marcy on us!" said Ned; "boys, isn't it an awful thing to speak to a spirit? my hair is like I dunna what, it's sticking up so stiff upon my head."

"Spake to it in English, Ned," said they, "till we hear what it will say. Ax it does anything trouble it; or whether its *soul's* in Purgatory."

"Wouldn't it be bettler," observed another, "to ax it who murdered it; maybe it wants to discover that?"

"In the—na-me of—Go-o-d-ness," said Ned, down to me, "what are you?"

"I'm the soul," I replied, in the same voice, "of the pedlar that was murdered on the bridge below."

"And—who—was—it, sur, wid—submission, that—murdered—you?"

To this I made no reply.

"I say," continued Ned, "in—the—name—of—G-o-o-d-ness—who was it—that took the liberty of murdhering you, dacent man?"

"Ned Corrigan," I answered, giving his own name.

"Hem! God presarve us! Ned Corrigan!" he exclaimed. "What Ned, for there's two of them—Is it myself, or the *other* vagabone?"

"Yourself, you murderer!" I replied.

"Ho!" said Ned, getting quite stout, "is that you, neighbour? Come, now, walk out wid yourself out of that coffin, you vagabone you, whoever you are."

"What do you mane, Ned, by spaking to it that-a-way?" the rest inquired.

"Hut," said Ned, "it's some fellow or other that's playing a thrick upon us. Sure I never knew either act nor part of the murder, nor of the murderers; and you know, if it was anything of that nature, it couldn't tell me a lie, and me a Scapularian, along wid axing it in God's name, wid Father Feasthalagh's Latin."

"Big tare-an'-ouns!" said the rest; "if we thought it was any man making fun of us, but we'd crop the ears off his head, to tache him to be joking!"

To tell the truth, when I heard this suggestion, I began to repent of my frolic; but I was determined to make another effort to finish the adventure creditably.

"Ned," said they, "throw some of the holy water on us all, and in the name of St. Pether and the Blessed Virgin, we'll go down and examine it in a body."

This they considered a good thought, and Ned was sprinkling the water about him in all directions, whilst he repeated some jargon which was completely unintelligible. They then began to approach the coffin at dead-march time, and I felt that this was the only moment in which my plan could succeed; for had I waited until they came down, all would have been discovered. As soon, therefore, as they began to move towards me, I also began, with equal solemnity, to retrograde towards *them*; so that, as the coffin was between us, it seemed to move without human means.

"Stop, for God's sake, stop," shouted Ned; "it's movin'! It has made the coffin alive; don't you see it thravelling this way widout hand or foot, barring the boards?"

There was now a halt to ascertain the fact: but I still retrograded. This was sufficient; a cry of terror broke from the whole group, and, without waiting for further evidence, they set off in the direction they came from, at full speed, Ned flinging the jug of holy water at the coffin, lest the latter should follow, or the former encumber him in his flight. Never was there so complete a discomfiture; and so eager were they to escape, that several of them came down on the stones; and I could hear them shouting with desperation, and imploring the more advanced not to leave them behind. I instantly disentangled myself from the coffin, and left it standing exactly in the middle of the road, for the next passenger to give it a lift as far as Denis Kelly's, if he felt so disposed. I lost no time in making the best of my way home; and on passing poor Denis's house I perceived, by the bustle and noise within, that he was dead.

I had given my friends no notice of this visit; my reception was consequently the warmer, as I was not expected. That evening was a happy one, which I shall long remember. At supper I alluded to Kelly, and received from my brother a full account, as given in the following narrative, of the circumstances which caused his death.

"I need not remind you, Toby, of our schoolboy days, nor of the principles usually imbibed at such schools as that in which the two tiny factions of the Caseys and the Murphys qualified themselves, among the latter of whom you cut so distinguished a figure. You will not, therefore, be surprised to hear that these two factions are as bitter as ever and that the boys who at Pat Mulligan's school belaboured each other, in imitation of their brothers and fathers, continue to set the same iniquitous example to their children; so that this groundless and hereditary enmity is likely to descend to future generations; unless, indeed, the influence of a more enlightened system of education may check it. But, unhappily, there is a strong suspicion of the object proposed by such a system; so that the advantages likely to result from it to the lower orders of the people will be slow and distant."

"But, John," said I, "now that we are upon that subject, let me ask what really is the bone of contention between Irish factions?"

"I assure you," he replied, "I am almost as much at a loss, Toby, to give you a satisfactory answer, as if you asked me the elevation of the highest mountain on the moon; and I believe you would find equal difficulty in ascertaining the cause of their feuds from the factions themselves. I really am convinced they know not, nor, if I rightly understand them, do they much care. Their object is to fight, and the turning of a straw will at any time furnish them with sufficient grounds for that. I do not think, after all, that the enmity between them is purely personal: they do not hate each other individually; but having originally had one quarrel upon some trifling occasion, the beaten party cannot bear the stigma of defeat without another trial of strength. Then, if they succeed, the *onus* of retrieving lost credit is thrown upon the party that was formerly victorious. If they fail a second time, the double triumph of their conquerors

excites them to a greater determination to throw off the additional disgrace; and this species of alternation perpetuates the evil.

“These habits, however, familiarise our peasantry to acts of outrage and violence—the bad passions are cultivated and nourished, until crimes, which peaceable men look upon with fear and horror, lose their real magnitude and deformity in the eyes of Irishmen. I believe this kind of undefined hatred between either parties or nations, is the most dangerous and fatal spirit which can pervade any portion of society. If you hate a man for an obvious and palpable injury, it is likely that when he cancels that injury by an act of subsequent kindness, accompanied by an exhibition of sincere sorrow, you will cease to look upon him as your enemy; but where the hatred is such that, while feeling it, you cannot, on a sober examination of your heart, account for it, there is little hope that you will ever be able to stifle the enmity which you entertain against him. This, however, in politics and religion, is what is frequently designated as principle—a word on which men, possessing higher and greater advantages than the poor ignorant peasantry of Ireland, pride themselves. In sects and parties, we may mark its effects among all ranks and nations. I, therefore, seldom wish, Toby, to hear a man assert that he is of this party or that, from *principle*; for I am usually inclined to suspect that he is not, in this case, influenced by *conviction*.

“Kelly was a man who, but for these scandalous proceedings among us, might have been now alive and happy. Although his temperament was warm, yet that warmth communicated itself to his good as well as to his evil qualities. In the beginning his family were not attached to any faction—and when I use the word *faction*, it is in contradistinction to the word *party*—for faction, you know, is applied to a feud or grudge between Roman Catholics exclusively. But when he was young, he ardently attached himself to the Murphys; and, having continued among them until manhood, he could not abandon them, consistently with that sense of mistaken honour which forms so prominent a feature in the character of the Irish peasantry. But although the Kellys were not *faction-men*, they were bitter *party-men*, being the ringleaders of every quarrel which took place between the Catholics and Protestants, or, I should rather say, between the Orangemen and Whiteboys.

“From the moment Denis attached himself to the Murphys, until the day he received the beating which subsequently occasioned his death, he never withdrew from them. He was in all their battles; and in course of time, induced his relations to follow his example; so that, by general consent, they were nicknamed ‘the Errigle Slashers.’ Soon after you left the country, and went to reside with my uncle, Denis married a daughter of little Dick Magrath’s, from the Race-road, with whom he got a little money. She proved a kind, affectionate wife; and, to do him justice, I believe he was an excellent husband. Shortly after his marriage his father died, and Denis succeeded him in his farm; for you know that, among the peasantry, the youngest generally gets the landed property—the elder children being obliged to provide for themselves according to their ability, as otherwise a population would multiply upon a portion of land inadequate to its support.

"It was supposed that Kelly's marriage would have been the means of producing a change in him for the better, but it did not. He was, in fact, the slave of a low, vain ambition, which constantly occasioned him to have some quarrel or other on his hands; and, as he possessed great physical courage and strength, he became the champion of the parish. It was in vain that his wife used every argument to induce him to relinquish such practices; the only reply he was in the habit of making, was a good-humoured slap on the back and a laugh, saying,

"'That's it, Honor; sure and isn't that the Magraths, all over, that would let the manest spalpeen that ever chewed cheese thramp upon them, without raising a hand in their own defence; and I don't blame you for being a coward, seeing that you have their blood in your veins—not but that there ought to be something better in you, after all; for it's the M'Karrons, by your mother's side, that had the good dhrop of their own in them, anyhow—but you're a Magrath, out and out.'

"'And, Denis,' Honor would reply, 'it would be a blessed day for the parish, if all in it were as peaceable as the same Magraths. There would be no sore heads, nor broken bones, nor fighting, nor slashing of one another in fairs and markets, when people ought to be minding their business. You're ever and always at the Magraths, bekase they don't join you agin the Caseys or the Orangemen, and more fools they'd be to make or meddle between you, having no spite agin either of them; and it would be wiser for you to be *sed* by the Magraths, and *red* your hands out of sich ways altogether. What did ever the Murphys do to sarve you or any of your family, that you'd go to make a great man of yourself fighting for them? Or what did the poor Caseys do to make you go agin the honest people? Arrah, bad manners to me, if you know what you're about, or if *sones** or grace can ever come of it; and mind my words, Denis, if God hasn't sed it, you'll live to rue your folly for the same work.'

"At thus Denis would laugh heartily. 'Well said, Honor *Magrath*, but not *Kelly*. Well, it's one comfort that our childher aren't likely to follow your side of the house, any way. Come here, Lanty; come over, acushla, to your father! Lanty, ma bouchal, what 'ill you do when you grow a man?'

"'I'll buy a horse of my own to ride on, daddy.'

"'A horse, Lanty! and so you will, ma bouchal; but that's not it—sure that's not what I mane, Lanty. What 'ill you do to the Caseys?'

"'Ho, ho! the Caseys! I'll bate the blackguards wid your blackthorn, daddy!'

"'Ha, ha, ha! that's my stout man, my brave little eoger! *Wus dha lamh, avick!*—give me your hand, my son! Here, Nelly,' he would say to the child's eldest sister, 'give him a brave whang of bread, to make him able to bate the Caseys. Well, Lanty, who more will you leather, a-hagur?'

"'All the Orangemen; I'll kill all the Orangemen!'

"This would produce another laugh from the father, who would again

* Good luck.

kiss and shake hands with his son, for these early manifestations of his own spirit.

“ ‘Lanty, ma bouchal,’ he would say, ‘thank God, you’re not a *Magrath*; ’tis you that’s a *Kelly*, every blessed inch of you! and if you turn out as good a *buillagh batthah* as your father afore you, I’ll be contint, avourneen!’

“ ‘God forgive you, Denis,’ the wife would reply, ‘it’s long before you’d think of larning him his prayers, or his catechiz, or anything that’s good! Lanty, agra, come over to myself, and never heed what that man says; for, except you have some poor body’s blessing, he’ll bring you to no good.’

“ Sometimes, however, Kelly’s own natural good sense, joined with the remonstrances of his wife, prevailed for a short time, and he would withdraw himself from the connexion altogether; but the force of habit and of circumstances was too strong in him, to hope that he could ever overcome it by his own firmness, for he was totally destitute of religion. The peaceable intervals of his life were therefore very short.

“ One summer evening I was standing in my own garden, when I saw a man galloping up towards me at full speed. When he approached, I recognised him as one of the Murphy faction, and perceived that he was cut and bleeding.

“ ‘Murphy,’ said I, ‘what’s the matter?’

“ ‘Hard fighting, sir,’ said he, ‘is the matter. The Caseys gathered all their faction, becase they heard that Denis Kelly has given us up, and they’re sweeping the street wid us. I’m going hot foot for Kelly, sir, for even the very name of him will turn the tide in our favour. Along wid that, I have sint in a score of the Duggans, and, if I get in Denis, please God we’ll clear the town of them!’

“ He then set off, but pulled up abruptly, and said,

“ ‘Arrah, Mr. Darcy, maybe you’d be civil enough to lind me the loan of a sword, or bagnet, or gun, or anything that way, that would be sarviceable to a body on a pinch?’

“ ‘Yes!’ said I, ‘and enable you to commit murder? No, no, Murphy; I’m sorry it’s not in my power to put a final stop to such dangerous quarrels!’

“ He then dashed off, and in the course of a short time I saw him and Kelly, both on horseback, hurrying into the town in all possible haste, armed with their cudgels. The following day, I got my dog and gun, and sauntered about the hills, making a point to call upon Kelly. I found him with his head tied up, and his arm in a sling.

“ ‘Well, Denis,’ said I, ‘I find you have kept your promise of giving up quarrels!’

“ ‘And so I did, sir,’ said Denis; ‘but, sure you wouldn’t have me for to go desart them, when the Caseys war three to one over them? No; God be thanked, I’m not so mane as that, anyhow. Besides, they welted both my brothers within an inch of their lives.’

“ ‘I think they didn’t miss yourself,’ said I.

“ ‘You may well say they did not, sir,’ he replied; ‘and, to tell God’s thruth, they thrashed us right and left out of the town, although we

rallied three times, and came in agin. At any rate, it's the first time fot the last five years that they dare go up and down the street, calling our for the face of a Murphy, or a Kelly; for they're as bitter now agin us as agin the Murphys themselves.'

" 'Well, I hope, Denis,' I observed, 'that what occurred yesterday will prevent you from entering into their quarrels in future. Indeed, I shall not give over, until I prevail on you to lead a quiet and peaceable life, as the father of a rising family ought to do.'

" 'Denis,' said the wife, when I alluded to the children, looking at him with a reproachful and significant expression—'Denis, do you hear *that!*—the *father* of a family, Denis! Oh, then, God look down on that family; but it's—Musha, God bless you and yours, sir,' said she to me, dropping that part of the subject abruptly; 'it's kind of you to trouble yourself about him, at all at all: it's what them that has a better right to do it, doesn't do.'

" 'I hope,' said I, 'that Denis's own good sense will show him the folly and guilt of his conduct, and that he will not, under any circumstances, enter into their battles in future. Come, Denis, will you promise me this?'

" 'If any man,' replied Denis, 'could make me do it, it's yourself, sir, or any one of your family; but, if the priest of the parish was to go down on his knees before me, I wouldn't give it up till we give them vagabone Caseys one glorious battherin', which, plase God, we'll do, and are well able to do, before a month of Sundays goes over us. Now, sir, you needn't say another word,' said he, seeing me about to speak; 'for by Him that made me we'll do it! If any man, I say, could persuade me agin it, you could; but, if we don't pay them full interest for what we got, why, my name's not Denis Kelly—ay, sweep them like varmint out of the town, body and sleeves!'

" I saw argument would be lost on him, so I only observed, that I feared it would eventually end badly.

" 'Och, many and many's the time, Mr. Darcy,' said Honor, 'I prophesied the same thing; and, if God hasn't said it, he'll be coming home a corpse to me some day or other; for he got as much bating, sir, as would be enough to kill a horse; and, to tell you God's truth, sir, he's breeding up his childher—'

" 'Honor,' said Kelly, irritated, 'whatever I do, do I lave it in your power to say that I'm a bad husband? so don't *rise* me by your talk, for I don't like to be provoked. I *know* it's wrong, but what can I do? Would you have me for to show the *Garran-bane**, and lave them like a cowardly thraitor, now that the other faction is coming up to be their match? No; let what will come of it, I'll never do the mane thing—death before dishonour!'

" In this manner Kelly went on for years; sometimes, indeed, keeping quiet for a short period, but eventually drawn in, from the apprehension of being reproached with want of honour and truth to his connexion.

* The white horse, *i.e.* be wanting in mettle. Tradition affirms that James the Second escaped on a white horse from the battle of the Boyne; and from this circumstance a white horse has become the emblem of cowardice.

This, truly, is an imputation which no peasant could endure ; nor, were he thought capable of treachery, would he be safe from the vengeance of his own party. Many a time have I seen Kelly reeling home, his head and face sadly cut, the blood streaming from him, and his wife and some neighbour on each side of him—the poor woman weeping and deploring the senseless and sanguinary feuds in which her husband took so active a part.

“ About three miles from this, down at the Long Ridge, where the Shannons live, dwelt a family of the Grogans, cousins to Denis. They were anything but industrious, although they might have lived very independently, having held a farm on what they call an *old take*, which means a long lease taken out when the lands were cheap. It so happened, however, that, like too many of their countrymen, they paid little attention to the cultivation of their farm ; the consequence of which neglect was, that they became embarrassed, and overburdened with arrears. Their landlord was old Sam Simmons, whose only fault to his tenants was an excess of indulgence, and a generous disposition wherever he could possibly get an opportunity to scatter his money about him, upon the spur of a benevolence which, it would seem, never ceased goading him to acts of the most Christian liberality and kindness. Along with these excellent qualities, he was remarkable for a most rooted aversion to law and lawyers ; for he would lose one hundred pounds rather than recover that sum by legal proceedings, even when certain that five pounds would effect it ; but he seldom or never was known to pardon a breach of the peace.

“ I have always found that an *excess* of indulgence in a landlord never fails ultimately to injure and relax the industry of the tenant ; at least, this was the effect which *his* forbearance produced on them. But the most extraordinary good-nature has its limits, and so had his ; after repeated warning, and the most unparalleled patience on his part, he was at length compelled to determine on at once removing them from his estate, and letting his land to some more efficient and deserving tenant. He accordingly desired them to remove their property from the premises, as he did not wish, he said, to leave them without the means of entering upon another farm, if they felt so disposed. This they refused to do ; adding, that they would, at least, put him to the expense of ejecting them. He then gave orders to his agent to seize ; but they, in the mean time, had secreted their effects by night among their friends and relations, sending a cow to this one and a horse to that ; so that when the bailiff came to levy his execution, he found very little, except the empty walls. They were, however, ejected without ceremony, and driven altogether off the farm, for which they had actually paid nothing for the three preceding years. In the mean time the farm was advertised to be let, and several persons had offered themselves as tenants ; but what appeared very remarkable was, that the Roman Catholics seldom came a second time to make any further inquiry about it ; or, if they did, Simmons observed that they were sure to withdraw their proposals, and ultimately decline having anything to do with it.

“ This was a circumstance which he could not properly understand ; but the fact was, that the peasantry were almost to a man members of a

widely-extending system of agrarian combination, the secret influence of which intimidated such of their own religion as intended to take it, and prevented them from exposing themselves to the penalty which they knew those who should dare to occupy it must pay. In a short time, however, the matter began to be whispered about, until it spread gradually, day after day, through the parish, that those who already had proposed, or intended to propose, were afraid to enter upon the land on any terms. Hitherto, it is true, these threats floated about only in the vague form of rumour.

"The farm had been now unoccupied for about a year; party spirit ran very high among the peasantry, and no proposals came in, or were at all likely to come. Simmons then got advertisements printed, and had them posted up in the most conspicuous parts of this and the neighbouring parishes. It was expected, however, that they would be torn down; but, instead of that, there was a written notice posted up immediately under each, which ran in the following words:—

" 'TAKE NOTICE.

" 'Any man that'll dare to take the farm belonging to smooth Sam Simmons, and situated at the long ridge, will be fayed alive.

" 'MAT MIDNIGHT.

" 'B. N.—It's it that was latterally occupied by the Grogans.'

"This occasioned Simmons and the other magistrates of the barony to hold a meeting, at which they subscribed to the amount of fifty pounds as a reward for discovering the author or authors of the threatening notice; but the advertisement containing the reward, which was posted in the usual places through the parish, was torn down on the first night after it was put up. In the mean time, a man, nicknamed Vengeance—Vesey Vengeance, in consequence of his daring and fearless spirit, and his bitterness in retaliating injury—came to Simmons, and proposed for the farm. The latter candidly mentioned the circumstances of the notice, and fairly told him that he was running a personal risk in taking it.

" 'Leave that to me, sir,' said Vengeance; 'if you will set me the farm at the terms I offer, I am willing to become your tenant; and let them that posted up the notices go to old Nick, or, if they annoy me, let them take care I don't send them there. I am a *trus-blue*, sir—a *purple man**—have lots of fire-arms, and plenty of stout fellows in the parish ready and willing to back me; and, by the light of day! if they make or meddle with me or mine, we will hunt them in the face of the world, like so many mad dogs, out of the country: what are they but a pack of *ribbles* †, that would cut our throats, if they dared?'

" 'I have no objection,' said Simmons, 'that you should express a firm determination to defend your life and protect your property; but I utterly condemn the spirit with which you seem to be animated. Be temperate and sober, but be firm. I will afford you every assistance and protection in my power, both as a magistrate and a landlord; but if you speak so incautiously, the result may be serious, if not fatal, to yourself.'

* These terms denote certain stages of initiation in the Orange system.

† Rebels.

“ ‘Instead of that,’ said Vengeance, ‘the more a man appears to be afeard, the more danger he is in, as I know by what I have seen; but, at any rate, if they injure me, I wouldn’t ask better sport than taking down the ribbles—the bloody-minded villains! Isn’t it a purty thing that a man darn’t put one foot past the other only as *they* wish? By the light o’ day, I’ll pepper them!’

“ Shortly after this, Vengeance, braving all their threats, removed to the farm, and set about its cultivation with skill and vigour. He had not been long there, however, when a notice was posted one night on his door, giving him ten days to clear off from this interdicted spot, threatening, in case of non-compliance, to make a bonfire of the house and offices, inmates included. The reply which Vengeance made to this was fearless and characteristic. He wrote another notice, which he posted on the chapel-door, stating that he would not budge an inch—recommending, at the same time, such as intended paying him a nightly visit to be careful that they might not chance to go home with their heels foremost. This, indeed, was setting them completely at defiance, and would, no doubt, have been fatal to Vesey, were it not for a circumstance which I will now relate:—In a little dell, below Vesey’s house, lived a poor woman, called Doran, a widow; she inhabited a small hut, and was principally supported by her two sons, who were servants, one to a neighbouring farmer, a Roman Catholic, and the other to Dr. Ableson, rector of the parish. He who had been with the rector lost his health shortly before Vengeance succeeded the Grogans as occupier of the land in question, and was obliged to come home to his mother. He was then confined to his bed, from which, indeed, he never rose.

“ This boy had been his mother’s principal support—for the other was unsettled, and paid her but little attention, being, like most of those in his situation, fond of drinking, dancing, and attending fairs. In short, he became a Ribbonman, and consequently was obliged to attend their nightly meetings. Now it so happened that for a considerable time after the threatening notice had been posted on Vengeance’s door, he received no annoyance, although the period allowed for his departure had been long past, and the purport of the paper uncomplied with. Whether this proceeded from an apprehension on the part of the Ribbonmen of receiving a warmer welcome than they might wish, or whether they deferred the execution of their threat until Vengeance might be off his guard, I cannot determine; but the fact is, that some months had elapsed and Vengeance remained hitherto unmolested.

“ During this interval the distress of Widow Doran had become known to the inmates of his family, and his mother—for she lived with him—used to bring down each day some nourishing food to the sick boy. In these kind offices she was very punctual; and so great was the poverty of the poor widow, and so destitute the situation of her sick son, that, in fact, the burden of their support lay principally upon Vengeance’s family.

“ Vengeance was a small, thin man, with fair hair, and fiery eyes; his voice was loud and shrill, his utterance rapid, and the general expression of his countenance irritable. His motions were so quick, that he rather seemed to run than walk. He was a civil, obliging neighbour,

but performed his best actions with a bad grace; a firm, unflinching friend, but a bitter and implacable enemy. Upon the whole, he was generally esteemed and respected—though considered as an eccentric character, for such, indeed he was. On hearing of Widow Doran's distress, he gave orders that a portion of each meal should be regularly sent down to her and her son; and from that period forward they were both supported principally from his table.

"In this way some months had passed, and still Vengeance was undisturbed in his farm. It often happened, however, that Doran's other son came to see his brother; and during these visits it was but natural that his mother and brother should allude to the kindness which they daily experienced from Vesey.

"One night, about twelve o'clock, a tap came to Widow Doran's door, who happened to be attending the invalid, as he was then nearly in the last stage of his illness. When she opened it, the other son entered, in an evident hurry, having the appearance of a man who felt deep and serious anxiety.

"'Mother,' said he, 'I was very uneasy entirely about Mick, and just started over to see him, although they don't know at home that I'm out, so I can't stay a crack; but I wish you would go to the door for two or three minutes, as I have something to say to him.'

"'Why, thin, Holy Mother!—Jack, a-hagur, is there anything the matther, for you look as if *you had seen something*'?"

"'Nothing worse than myself, mother,' he replied; 'nor there's nothing the matther at all—only I have a few words to say to Mick here, that's all.'

"The mother accordingly removed herself out of hearing.

"'Mick,' says the boy, 'this is a bad business—I wish to God I was clear and clane out of it.'

"'What is it?' said Mick, alarmed.

"'Murther, I'm afeard, if God doesn't turn it off of them, somehow.'

"'What do you mane, man, at all?' said the invalid, raising himself, in deep emotion, on his elbow, from his poor straw bed.

"'Vengeance,' said he—'Vengeance, man—he's going to get it. I was out with the boys on Sunday evening, and *at last* it's agreed on to visit him to-morrow night. I'm sure and sartin he'll never escape, for there's more *in* for him than taking the farm, and daring them so often as he did—he shot two fingers off of a brother-in-law of Jem Reilly's one night that they war *on* for thrashing him, and that's coming home to him along with the rest.'

"'In the name of God, Jack,' inquired Mick, 'what do they intend to do to him?'

"'Why,' replied Jack, 'it's agreed to put a coal in the thatch, in the first place; and although they were afeard to name what he's to get besides, I doubt they'll make a spatch-cock of *himself*. They won't meddle with any other of the family, though—but *he's down* for it.'

"'Are *you* to be one of them?' asked Mick.

* This phrase means—you look as if you had seen a ghost; it is a very common onc.

“ ‘ I was the third man named,’ replied the other, ‘ bekase, they said, I knew the place.’ ”

“ ‘ Jack,’ said his emaciated brother, with much solemnity, raising himself up in the bed—‘ Jack, if you have act or part in that bloody business, God in his glory you’ll never see. Fly the country—cut off a finger or toe—break your arm—or do something that may prevent you from being there. Oh, my God!’ he exclaimed, whilst the tears fell fast down his pale cheeks—‘ to go to murder the man, and lave his little family widout a head or a father over them, and his wife a widow! To burn his place, widout rhyme, or rason, or offence! Jack, if you go, I’ll die cursing you. I’ll appear to you—I’ll let you rest neither night nor day, sleeping nor waking, in bed or out of bed. I’ll haunt you, till you’ll curse the very hour you war born.’ ”

“ ‘ Whist, Micky,’ said Jack, ‘ you’re frightening me: I’ll not go—will that satisfy you?’ ”

“ ‘ Well, dhrop down on your two knees, there,’ said Micky, ‘ and swear before the God that has his eye upon you this minute, that you’ll have no hand in injuring him or his, while you live. If you don’t do this, I’ll not rest in my grave, and maybe I’ll be a corpee before mornin’.’ ”

“ ‘ Well, Micky,’ said Jack, who, though wild and unthinking, was a lad whose heart and affections were good, ‘ it would be hard for me to refuse you that much, and you not likely to be long wid me—I will;’ and he accordingly knelt down and swore solemnly, in words which his brother dictated to him, that he would not be concerned in the intended murder.

“ ‘ Now, give me your hand, Jack,’ said the invalid; ‘ God bless you—and so he will. Jack, if I depart before I see you again, I’ll die happy. That man has supported me and my mother, for near the last three months, bad as you all think him. Why, Jack, we would both be dead of hunger long ago, only for his family; and, my God! to think of such a murdering intention makes my blood run cowl’d’—”

“ ‘ You had better give him a hint then,’ said Jack, ‘ some way, or he’ll be done for, as sure as you’re stretched on that bed; but don’t mintion names, if you wish to keep me from being murdered for what I did. I must be off now, for I stole out of the barn* ; and only that Atty Laghy’s gone along wid the master to the — fair, to help him to sell the two coults, I couldn’t get over at all.’ ”

“ ‘ Well, go home, Jack, and God bless you, and so he will, for what you did this night.’ ”

“ Jack accordingly departed, after bidding his mother and brother farewell.

“ When the old woman came in, she asked her son if there was anything wrong with his brother, but he replied that there was not.

“ ‘ Nothing at all,’ said he—‘ but will you go up airly in the morning, plase God, and tell Vesey Johnston that I want to see him; and—that—I have a great dale to say to him.’ ”

“ ‘ To be sure I will, Micky; but, Lord guard us, what ails you, avourneen, you look so frightened?’ ”

* Labouring servants in Ireland usually sleep in barns.

“‘Nothing at all, at all, mother; but will you go where I say airy o-morrow, for me?’

“‘It’s the first thing I’ll do, God willin’,’ replied the mother. And the next morning Vosey was down with the invalid very early, for the old woman kept her word, and paid him a timely visit.

“‘Well, Micky, my boy,’ said Vengeance, as he entered the hut, ‘I hope you’re no worse this morning.’

“‘Not worse, Sir,’ replied Mick; ‘nor, indeed, am I anything better either, but much the same way. Sure it’s I that knows very well that my time here is but short.’

“‘Well, Mick, my boy,’ said Vengeance, ‘I hope you’re prepared for death—and that you expect forgiveness, like a Christian. Look up, my boy, to God at once, and pitch the priests and their craft to ould Nick, where they’ll all go at the long-run.’

“‘I b’lieve,’ said Mick, with a faint smile, ‘that you’re not very fond of the priests, Mr. Johnston; but if you knew the power they possess as well as I do, you wouldn’t spake of them so bad, anyhow.’

“‘Me fond of them!’ replied the other; ‘why, man, they’re a set of the most gluttonous, black-looking hypocrites, that ever walked on neat’s leather; and ought to be hunted out of the country—hunted out of the country, by the light of day! every one of them; for they do nothing but egg up the people against the Protestants.’

“‘God help you, Mr. Johnston,’ replied the invalid, ‘I pity you from my heart for the opinion you hould about them. I suppose if you were strucked dead on the spot wid a blast from the fairies, that you think a priest couldn’t cure you by one word’s spaking?’

“‘Cure me!’ said Vengeance, with a laugh of disdain; ‘by the light of day! if I caught one of them curing me, I’d give him the purtiest chase you ever saw in your life, across the hills.’

“‘Don’t you know,’ said Mick, ‘that priest Dannelly cured Bob Beaty of the falling sickness—until he broke the vow that was laid upon him, of not going into a church, and the minute he crossed the church-door, didn’t he dhrop down as bad as ever—and what could the minister do for him?’

“‘And don’t you know,’ rejoined Vengeance, ‘that that’s all a parcel of the most lying stuff possible; lies—lies—all lies—and vagabondism? Why, Mick, you Papishes worship the priests; you think they can bring you to heaven at a word. By the light of day they must have good sport laughing at you, when they get among one another. Why don’t they teach you and give you the Bible to read, the ribelley rascals? but they’re afraid you’d know too much then.’

“‘Well, Mr. Johnston,’ said Mick, ‘I b’lieve you’ll never have a good opinion of them, at any rate.’

“‘Ay, when the sky falls,’ replied Vengeance; ‘but you’re now on your death-bed, and why don’t you pitch them to ould Nick, and get a Bible? Get a Bible, man; there’s a pair of them in my house, that’s never used at all—except my mother’s, and she’s at it night and day. I’ll send one of them down to you: turn yourself to God—to your Redeemer, that died on the mount of Jehoshaphat, or somewhere about Jerusalem, for

your sins—and don't go out of the world from the hand of a rascally priest, with a band about your eyes, as if you were at blind-man's-buff for, by the light of day you're as blind as a bat in a religious way.'

" 'There's no use in sending me a Bible,' replied the invalid, 'for I can't read it: but, whatever you may think, I'm very willing to lave my salvation with my priest.'

" 'Why, man,' observed Vengeance, 'I thought you were going to have sense at last, and that you sent for me to give you some spiritual consolation.'

" 'No, Sir,' replied Mick; 'I have two or three words to spake to you.'

" 'Come, come, Mick, now that we're on a spiritual subject, I'll hear nothing from you till I try whether it's possible to give you a true insight into religion. Stop, now, and let us lay our heads together, that we may make out something of a dacenter creed for you to believe in than the one you profess. Tell me the truth, do you believe in the priests?'

" 'How?' replied Mick; 'I believe that they're holy men—but I know they can't save me widout the Redeemer, and his blessed mother.'

" 'By the light above us, you're shuffling, Mick—I say you *do* believe in them—now, don't tell me to the contrary—I say you're shuffling as fast as possible.'

" 'I tould you truth, Sir,' replied Mick; 'and if you don't believe me, I can't help it.'

" 'Don't trust in the priests, Mick; that's the main point to secure your salvation.'

" Mick, who knew his prejudices against the priests, smiled faintly, and eplied—

" 'Why, Sir, I trust in them as bein' able to make inthercession wid God for me, that's all.'

" 'They make intercession! By the stool I'm sitting on, a single word from one of them would ruin you. They, a set of ribles, to make interest for you in heaven! Didn't they rise the rebellion in Ireland?—answer me that.'

" 'This is a subject, Sir, we would never agree on,' replied Mick.

" 'Have you the Ten Commandments?' inquired Vesey.

" 'I doubt my mimory's not clear enough to have them in my mind,' said the lad, feeling keenly the imputation of ignorance, which he apprehended from Vesey's blunt observations.

" Vesey, however, had penetration enough to perceive his feelings, and, with more delicacy than could be expected from him, immediately moved the question.

" 'No matter, Mick,' said he, 'if you would give up the priests, we would get over that point: as it is, I will give you a lift in the Commandments; and, as I said a while ago, if you take my advice, I'll work up a creed for you that you may depend upon. But now for the Commandments—let me see.'

" 'First: Thou shalt have no other gods but me. Don't you see, man, how that peppers the priests?'

" 'Second: Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day.'

" 'Third: Thou shalt not make to thyself—no, hang it no!—I'm out—'

that's the Second—very right. Third: Honour thy father and thy mother—you understand that, Mick? It means that you are bound to—to—just so—to honour your father and your mother, poor woman.'

"My father—God be good to him!—is dead near fourteen years, sir," replied Mick.

"Well, in that case, Mick, you see all that's left for you is to honour your mother—although I'm not certain of that either; the Commandments make no allowance at all for death, and in that case why, living or dead, the surest way is to respect and obey them—that is, if the thing wern't impossible. I wish we had blind George M'Girr here, Mick: although he's as great a rogue as ever escaped hemp, yet he'd beat the devil himself at a knotty point.'

"His breath would be bad about a dying man,' observed Mick.

"Ay, or a living one,' said Vesey; 'however, let us get on—we wera at the Third. Fourth: Thou shalt do no murder.'

"At the word murder, Mick started, and gave a deep groan, whilst his eyes and features assumed a gaunt and hollow expression, resembling that of a man struck with an immediate sense of horror and affright.

"Oh! for heaven's sake, sir, stop there,' said Doran; 'that brings to my mind the business I had with you, Mr. Johnston.'

"What is it about?' inquired Vengeance, in his usual eager manner.

"Do you mind,' said Mick, 'that a paper was stuck one night upon your door, threatening you, if you wouldn't lave that farm you're in?'

"I do, the blood-thirsty villains! but they knew a trick worth two of coming near me.'

"Well,' said Mick, 'a strange man, that I never seen before, came into me last night, and tould me, if I'd see you, to say that you would get a visit from the boys this night, and to take care of yourself.'

"Give me the hand, Mick,' said Vengeance—'give me the hand; in spite of the priests, by the light of day you're an honest fellow. This night, you say, they're to come? And what are the bloody wretches to do, Mick? But I needn't ask that, for I suppose it's to murder myself, and to burn my place.'

"I'm afeard, sir, you're not far from the truth,' replied Mick; 'but, Mr. Johnston, for God's sake, don't mintion my name; for, if you do, I'll get myself what they war laying out for you—be burned in my bed, maybe.'

"Never fear, Mick,' replied Vengeance; 'your name will never cross my lips.'

"It's a great thing,' said Mick, 'that would make me turn informer; but sure, only for your kindness and the goodness of your family, the Lord spare you to one another! mightn't I be dead long ago? I couldn't have one minute's peace if you or yours came to any harm when I could prevint it.'

"Say no more, Mick,' said Vengeance, taking his hand again; 'I know that, leave the rest to me; but how do you find yourself, my poor fellow? you look weaker than you did, a good deal.'

"Indeed I'm going very fast, Sir,' replied Mick; 'I know it'll soon be over with me.'

“ ‘Hut, no, man,’ said Vengeance, drawing his hand rapidly across his eyes, and clearing his voice, ‘not at all—don’t say so: would a little broth serve you? or a bit of fresh meat?—or would you have a fancy for anything that I could make out for you? I’ll get you wine, if you think it would do you good.’ ”

“ ‘God reward you,’ said Mick feebly—‘God reward you, and open your eyes to the truth. Is my mother likely to come in, do you think?’ ”

“ ‘She must be here in a few minutes,’ the other replied; ‘she was waiting till they’d churn, that she might bring you down a little fresh milk and butter.’ ”

“ ‘I wish she was wid me,’ said the poor lad, ‘for I’m lonely wantin’ her—her voice and the very touch of her hands goes to my heart. Mother, come to me, and let me lay my head upon your breast, agra machree, for I think it will be for the last time: we lived lonely, avourneen, wid none but ourselves—sometimes in happiness, when the nabours ’ud be kind to us—and sometimes in sorrow, when there ’ud be none to help us. It’s over now, mother, and I’m lavin’ you for ever!’ ”

“ Vengeance wiped his eyes—‘Rouse yourself, Mick,’ said he, ‘rouse yourself.’ ”

“ ‘Who is that sitting along with you on the stool?’ said Mick. ”

“ ‘No one,’ replied his neighbour; ‘but what’s the matter with you, Mick?—your face is changed.’ ”

“ Mick, however, made no reply; but after a few slight struggles, in which he attempted to call upon his mother’s name, he breathed his last. When Vengeance saw that he was dead—looked upon the cold, miserable but in which this grateful and affectionate young man was stretched—and then reflected on the important service he had just rendered him, he could not suppress his tears. ”

“ After sending down some of the females to assist his poor mother in laying him out, Vengeance went among his friends and acquaintances, informing them of the intelligence he had received, without mentioning the source from which he had it. After dusk that evening, they all flocked, as privately as possible, to his house, to the number of thirty or forty, well provided with arms and ammunition. Some of them stationed themselves in the outhouses, some behind the garden-hedge, and others in the dwelling-house. ”

When my brother had got thus far in his narrative, a tap came to the parlour-door, and immediately a stout-looking man, having the appearance of a labourer, entered the room. ”

“ Well, Lachlin,” said my brother, “what’s the matter?” ”

“ Why, Sir,” said Lachlin, scratching his head, “I had a bit of a favour to ax, if it would be plasin’ to you to grant it to me.” ”

“ What is that?” said my brother. ”

“ Do you know, Sir,” said he, “I haven’t been at a wake—let us see—this two or three years, anyhow; and, if you’d have no objection, why, I’d slip up awhile to Denis Kelly’s; he’s a distant relation of my own, Sir; and blood’s thicker than wather, you know.” ”

“ I’m just glad you came in, Lachlin,” said my brother; “I didn’t think of you; take a chair here, and never heed the wake to-night, but

sit down and tell us about the attack on Vesey Vengeance, long ago. I'll get you a tumbler of punch; and, instead of going to the wake, I will allow you to go to the funeral to-morrow."

"Ah, Sir," said Lachlin, "you know whenever the punch is consarned, I'm aasily persuaded; but not making little of your tumbler, Sir," said the shrewd fellow, "I would get two or three of them if I went to the wake."

"Well, sit down," said my brother, handing him one, "and we won't permit you to get thirsty while you're talking, at all events."

"In throth, you haven't your heart in the likes of it," said Lachlin. "Gintlemen, your healths—*your* health, Sir, and we're happy to see you wanst more. Why, thin, I remember you, Sir, when you were a gorsoon, passing to school wid your satchell on your back; but, I'll be bound you're by no means as soople now as you were thin. Why, Sir," turning to my brother, "he could fly or kick football wid the rabbits.—Well, this is raal stuff!"

"Now, Lachlin," said my brother, "give us an account of the attack you made on Vesey Vengeance's house, at the Long Ridge, when all his party were chased out of the town."

"Why, thin, Sir, I ought to be ashamed to mintion it; but you see, gintlemen, there was no getting over being connected wid them; but I hope your brother's *safe*, Sir!"

"Oh, perfectly safe, Lachlin; you may rest assured he'll never mention it."

"Well, Sir, said Lachlin, addressing himself to me, "Vesey Vengeance was—"

"Lachlin," said my brother, "he knows all about Vesey; just give an account of the attack."

"The attack, Sir! no, but the chivey we got over the mountains. Why, Sir, we met in an ould empty house, you see, that belonged to the Farrells of Ballyboulteen, that went over to America that spring. There war none wid us, you may be sure, but them that war *up**; and in all we might be about sixty or seventy. The Grogans, one way or another, got it up first among them, bekase they expected that Mr. Simmons would take them back when he'd find that no one else dare venther upon their land. There war at that time two fellows down from the county Longford in their neighbourhood, of the name of Collier—although that wasn't their right name—they were here upon their keeping, for the murder of a proctor in their own part of the country. One of them was a tall, powerful fellow, with sandy hair, and red brows; the other was a slender chap, that must have been drawn into it by his brother—for he was very mild and innocent, and always persuaded us agin evil. The Grogans brought lashings of whiskey, and made them that war to go foremost amost drunk—these war the two Colliers, some of the strangers from behind the mountains, and a son of Widdy Doran's, that knew every inch about the place, for he was bred and born jist below the house a bit. He wasn't wid us, however, in regard of his brother being *under boord* that night; but, instid of him, Tim Grogan went to show the way up the

* That is, had been made members of a secret society

little glin to the house, though, for that matther, the most of us knew it as well as he did; but we didn't like to be the first to put a hand to it, if we could help it.

"At any rate, we sot in Farrell's empty house, drinking whiskey, till they war all gathered, when about two dozen of them got the damp soot from the chimley, and rubbed it over their faces, making them so black, that their own relations couldn't know them. We then went across the country in little lots, of about six or ten, or a score, and we war glad that the wake was in Widdy Doran's, seeing that, if any one would meet us, we war going to it you know, and the blackening of the faces would pass for a frolic; but there was no great danger of being met, for it was now long beyant midnight.

"Well, gintlemen, it puts me into a tremble, even at this time, to think of how little we cared about doing what we were bent upon. Them that had to manage the business war more than half drunk; and, hard fortune to me! but you would think it was to a wedding they went—some of them singing songs against the law—some of them quite merry, and laughing as if they had found a mare's nest. The big fellow, Collier, had a dark lantern wid a half-burned turf in it to light the bonfire, as they said; others had guns and pistols—some of them charged, and some of them not; some had bagnets, and ould rusty swords, pitchforks, and so on. Myself had nothing in my hand but the flail I was thrashing wid that day; and to tell the thruth, the divil a step I would have gone with them, only for fraid of my health: for, as I said awhile agone, if any discovery was made afterwards, them that promised to go, and turned tail, would be marked as the informers. Neither was I so blind, but I could see that there war plenty there that would stay away if they durst.

"Well, we went on till we came to a little dark corner below the house, where we met and held a council of war upon what we should do. Collier and the other strangers from behind the mountains war to go first, and the rest war to stand round the house at a distance—he carried the lantern, a bagnet, and a horse pistol; and half-a-dozen more war to bring over bottles of straw from Vengeance's own haggard, to hould up to the thatch. It's all past and gone now—but three of the Reillys were desperate against Vesey that night, particularly one of them that he had shot about a year and a half before—that is, peppered two of the right-hand fingers off of him, one night in a scuffle, as Vesey came home from an Orange-lodge. Well, all went on purty fair; we had got as far as the out-houses, where we stopped, to see if we could hear any noise; but all was quiet as you plase.

"'Now, Vengeance,' says Reilly, swearing a terrible oath out of him—'you murdering Orange villain, you're going to get your pay,' says he.

"'Ay,' says Grogan, 'what he often threatened to others he'll soon meet himself, plase God!—come, boys,' says he, 'bring the straw and light it, and just lay it up, my darlings, nicely to the thatch here, and ye'll see what a glorious bonfire we'll have of the black orange villain's blankets in less than no time.'

"Some of us could hardly stand this: 'Stop, boys,' cried one of Dan

Slevin's sons—'stop, Vengeance is bad enough, but his wife and children never offended us—we'll not burn the place.'

"'No,' said others, spaking out when they heard any body at all having courage to do so—'it's too bad, boys, to burn the place; for if we do,' says they, 'some of the innocent may be burned before they get from the house, or even before they waken out of their sleep.'

"'Knock at the door first,' says Slevin, 'and bring Vengeance out; let us cut the ears off of his head and lave him.'

"'Damn him!' says another, 'let us not take the vagabone's life; it's enough to take the ears from him, and to give him a *prod* or two of a bagnet on the ribs; but don't kill him.'

"'Well, well,' says Reilly, 'let us knock at the door, and get himself and the family out,' says he, 'and then we'll see what can be done wid him.'

"'Tattheration to me,' says the big Longford fellow, 'if he had sarved me, Reilly, as he did you, but I'd roast him in the flames of his own house,' says he.

"'I'd have you to know,' says Slevin, 'that you have no command here, Collier. I'm captain at the present time,' says he; 'and more nor what I wish shall not be done. Go over,' says he to the black faces, 'and rap him up.'

"Accordingly they began to knock at the door, commanding Vengeance to get up and come out to them.

"'Come, Vengeance,' says Collier, 'put on you, my good fellow, and come out till two or three of your neighbours, that wish you we'll gets a sight of your purty face, you babe of grace!'

"'Who are you that wants me at all?' says Vengeance from within.

"'Come out, first,' says Collier; 'a few friends that has a crow to pluck with you: walk out, avourneen; or if you'd rather be roasted alive, why you may stay where you are,' says he.

"'Gentlemen,' says Vengeance, 'I have never to my knowledge, offended any of you; and I hope you won't be so cruel as to take an industrious, hard-working man from his family, in the clouds of the night, to do him an injury. Go home, gentlemen, in the name of God, and let me and mine alone. You're all mighty dacent gentlemen, you know, and I'm determined never to make or meddle with any of you. Sure, I know right well it's purtecting me you would be, dacent gentlemen. But I don't think there's any of my neighbours there, or they wouldn't stand by and see me injured.'

"'Thru for you, avick,' says they, giving, at the same time, a terrible patterrara agin the door, with two or three big stones.

"'Stop, stop!' says Vengeance, 'don't break the door, and I'll open it. I know you're merciful, dacent gentlemen—I know you're merciful.'

"So the thief came and unbarred it quietly, and the next minute about a dozen of them that war within the house let slap at us. As God would have had it, the crowd didn't happen to be forenent the door, or numbers of them would have been shot, and the night was dark, too, which was in our favour. The first volley was scarcoly over, when there was another slap from the out-houses; and after that another from the

gardens ; and after that, to be sure, we took to our scrapers. Several of them were very badly wounded ; but as for Collier, he was shot dead, and Grogan was taken prisoner, with five more, on the spot. There never was such a chase as we got ; and only that they thought there was more of us in it, they might have tuck most of us prisoners.

“ ‘ Fly, boys, !’ says Grogan, as soon as they fired out of the house — ‘ we’ve been sould,’ says he, ‘ but I’ll die game, any how,’—and so he did, poor fellow ; for although he and the other four war transported, one of them never sould the pass or stagged. Not but that they might have done it, for all that, only that there was a whisper sent to them, that if they *did*, a single soul belonging to one of them wouldn’t be left living. The Grogans were cousins of Denis Kelly’s, that’s now laid out there above.

“ From the time this tuck place till after the ‘ sizes, there wasn’t a stir among them on any side ; but when that war over, the boys began to prepare. Denis, heavens be his bed, was there in his glory. This was in the spring ‘ sizes, and the May fair soon followed. Ah ! that was the bloody sight, I’m tould—for I wasn’t at it—atween the Orangemen and them. The Ribbonmen war bate though, but not till after there was a desperate fight on both sides. I was tould that Denis Kelly that day knocked down five-and-twenty men in about three-quarters of an hour ; and only that long John Grimes hot him a *polthoge* on the sconce with the butt-end of the gun, it was thought the Orangemen would be beat. That blow broke his skull, and was the manes of his death. He was carried home senseless.”

“ Well, Lachlin,” said my brother, “ if you didn’t see it, I did. I happened to be looking out of John Carson’s upper window—for it wasn’t altogether safe to contemplate it within reach of the missiles. It was certainly a dreadful and a barbarous sight. You have often observed the calm, gloomy silence that precedes a thunder-storm ; and had you been there that day, you might have witnessed its illustration in a scene much more awful. The thick living mass of people extended from the corner-house, nearly a quarter of a mile, at this end of the town, up to the parsonage on the other side. During the early part of the day, every kind of business was carried on in a hurry and an impatience, which denoted the little chance they knew there would be for transacting it in the evening.

“ Up to the hour of four o’clock the fair was unusually quiet, and, on the whole, presented nothing in any way remarkable ; but after that hour you might observe the busy stir and hum of the mass settling down into a deep, brooding, portentous silence, that was absolutely fearful. The females with dismay and terror pictured in their faces, hurried home ; and in various instances you might see mothers, and wives, and sisters, clinging about the sons, husbands, and brothers, attempting to drag them by main force from the danger which they knew impended over them. In this they seldom succeeded ; for the person so urged was usually compelled to tear himself from them by superior strength.

“ The pedlars and basket-women, and such as had tables and standings erected in the streets, commenced removing them with all possible haste.

The shopkeepers, and other inhabitants of the town, put up their shutters, in order to secure their windows from being shattered. Strangers, who were compelled to stop in town that night, took shelter in the inns and other houses of entertainment where they lodged : so that about five o'clock the street was completely clear, and free for action.

“Hitherto there was not a stroke—the scene became even more silent and gloomy, although the moral darkness of their ill-suppressed passions was strongly contrasted with the splendour of the sun, that poured down a tide of golden light upon the multitude. This contrast between the natural brightness of the evening, and the internal gloom of their hearts, as the beams of the sun rested upon the ever-moving crowd, would, to any man who knew the impetuosity with which the spirit of religious hatred was soon to rage among them, produce novel and singular sensations. For, after all, Toby, there is a mysterious connection between natural and moral things, which often invests both nature and sentiment with a feeling that certainly would not come home to our hearts, if such a connection did not exist. A rose-tree beside a grave will lead us from sentiment to reflection ; and any other association, where a painful or melancholy thought is clothed with a garb of joy or pleasure, will strike us more deeply in proportion as the contrast is strong. On seeing the sun or moon struggling through the darkness of surrounding clouds, I confess, although you may smile, that I feel for the moment a diminution of enjoyment—something taken, as it were, from the sum of my happiness.

“Ere the quarrel commenced, you might see a dark and hateful glare scowling from the countenances of the two parties, as they viewed and approached each other in the street—the eye was set in deadly animosity, and the face marked with an ireful paleness, occasioned at once by revenge and apprehension. Groups were silently hurrying with an eager and energetic step to their places of rendezvous, grasping their weapons more closely, or grinding their teeth in the impatience of their fury. The veterans on each side were surrounded by their respective followers, anxious to act under their direction ; and the very boys seemed to be animated with a martial spirit, much more eager than that of those who had greater experience in party quarrels.

“Jem Finigan's public-house was the head-quarters and rallying-point of the Ribbonmen ; the Orangemen assembled in that of Joe Sherlock, the master of an Orange lodge. About six o'clock, the crowd in the street began gradually to fall off to the opposite ends of the town—the Roman Catholics towards the north, and the Protestants towards the south. Carson's window, from which I was observing their motions, was exactly half way between them, so that I had a distinct view of both. At this moment I noticed Denis Kelly coming forward from the closely condensed mass formed by the Ribbonmen : he advanced with his cravat off, to the middle of the vacant space between the parties, holding a fine oak cudgel in his hand. He then stopped, and addressing the Orangemen, said,

“ ‘ Where's Vengeance and his crew now ? Is there any single Orange villain among you that dare come down and meet me here, like a man ?

Is John Grimes there? for if he is, before we begin to take you out of a face, to hunt you altogether out of the town, ye Orange villains, I would be glad that he'd step down to Denis Kelly here for two or three minutes; I'll not keep him longer.'

"There was now a stir and a murmur among the Orangemen, as if a rush was about to take place towards Denis; but Grimes, whom I saw endeavouring to curb them in, left the crowd, and advanced towards him.

"At this moment an instinctive movement among both masses took place; so that when Grimes had come within a few yards of Kelly, both parties were within two or three perches of them. Kelly was standing, apparently off his guard, with one hand thrust carelessly into the breast of his waistcoat, and the cudgel in the other; but his eye was fixed calmly upon Grimes as he approached. They were both powerful, fine men—brawny, vigorous, and active: Grimes had somewhat the advantage of the other in height; he also fought with his left hand, from which circumstance he was nicknamed *Kitthougs*. He was a man of a dark, stern-looking countenance; and the tones of his voice were deep, sullen, and of appalling strength.

"As they approached each other, the windows on each side of the street were crowded; but there was not a breath to be heard in any direction, nor from either party. As for myself, my heart palpitated with anxiety. What *they* might have felt I do not know: but they must have experienced considerable apprehension; for as they were both the champions of their respective parties, and had never before met in single encounter, their characters depended on the issue of the contest.

"Well, Grimes,' said Denis, 'sure I've often wished for this same meetin', man, betune myself and you; I have what you're goin' to get, in for you this long time; but you'll get it now, avick, please God——'

"It was not to scould I came, you popish, ribly rascal,' replied Grimes, 'but to give you what you're long——'

"Ere the word had been out of his mouth, however, Kelly sprung over to him; and making a feint, as if he intended to lay the stick on his ribs, he swung it past without touching him, and, bringing it round his own head like lightning, made it tell with a powerful back-stroke, right on Grimes's temple, and in an instant his own face was sprinkled with the blood which sprung from the wound. Grimes staggered forward towards his antagonist, seeing which, Kelly sprung back, and was again meeting him with full force, when Grimes, turning a little, clutched Kelly's stick in his right hand, and being left-handed himself, ere the other could wrench the cudgel from him, he gave him a terrible blow upon the back part of the head, which laid Kelly in the dust.

"There was then a deafening shout from the Orange party; and Grimes stood until Kelly should be in the act of rising, ready then to give him another blow. The coolness and generalship of Kelly, however, were here very remarkable; for, when he was just getting to his feet, 'Look at your party coming down upon me!' he exclaimed to Grimes, who turned round to order them back, and, in the interim, Kelly was upon his legs.

"I was surprised at the coolness of both men; for Grimes was by no

means inflated with the boisterous triumph of his party—nor did Denis get into a blind rage on being knocked down. They approached again, their eyes kindled into savage fury, tamed down into the wariness of experienced combatants; for a short time they stood eyeing each other, as if calculating upon the contingent advantages of attack or defence. This was a moment of great interest; for, as their huge and powerful frames stood out in opposition, strung and dilated by the impulse of passion and the energy of contest, no judgment, however experienced, could venture to anticipate the result of the battle, or name the person likely to be victorious. Indeed it was surprising how the natural sagacity of these men threw their attitudes and movements into scientific form and symmetry. Kelly raised his cudgel, and placed it transversely in the air, between himself and his opponent; Grimes instantly placed his against it—both weapons thus forming a St. Andrew's cross—whilst the men themselves stood foot to foot, calm and collected. Nothing could be finer than their proportions, nor superior to their respective attitudes; their broad chests were in a line; their thick, well-set necks, laid a little back, as were their bodies, without, however, losing their balance; and their fierce but calm features, grimly but placidly scowling at each other, like men who were prepared for the onset.

“At length, Kelly made an attempt to repeat his former feint, with variations; for, whereas he had sent the first blow to Grimes's right temple, he took measures now to reach the left; his action was rapid, but equally quick was the eye of his antagonist, whose cudgel was up in ready guard to meet the blow. It met it; and with such surprising power was it sent and opposed, that both cudgels, on meeting, bent across each other into curves. An involuntary huzza followed this from their respective parties—not so much on account of the skill displayed by the combatants as in admiration of their cudgels, and of the judgment with which they must have been selected. In fact, it was the staves, rather than the men, that were praised; and certainly the former did their duty. In a moment their shillelachs were across each other once more, and the men resumed their former attitudes; their savage determination, their kindled eyes, the blood which disfigured the face of Grimes, and begrimed also the countenance of his antagonist into a deeper expression of ferocity, occasioned many a cowardly heart to shrink from the sight. There they stood, gory and stern, ready for the next onset; it was first made by Grimes, who tried to practise on Kelly the feint which Kelly had before practised on him. Denis, after his usual manner, caught the blow in his open hand, and clutched the staff, with an intention of holding it until he might visit Grimes, now apparently unguarded, with a levelling blow; but Grimes's effort to wrest the cudgel from his grasp, drew all Kelly's strength to that quarter, and prevented him from availing himself of the other's defenceless attitude. A trial of muscular power ensued, and their enormous bodily strength was exhibited in the stiff tug for victory. Kelly's address prevailed; for while Grimes pulled against him with all his collected vigour, the former suddenly let go his hold, and the latter, having lost his balance, staggered back: lightning could not be more quick than the action of Kelly, as, with tremendous force, his cudgel

rung on the unprotected head of Grimes, who fell, or rather was shot to the ground, as if some superior power had dashed him against it; and there he lay for a short time, quivering under the blow he had received.

"A peal of triumph now arose from Kelly's party; but Kelly himself, placing his arms a-kimbo, stood calmly over his enemy, awaiting his return to the conflict. For nearly five minutes he stood in this attitude, during which time Grimes did not stir; at length Kelly stooped a little, and peering closely into his face, exclaimed—

"'Why, then, is it acting you are?—any how, I wouldn't put it past you, you cunning vagabone; 'tis lying to take breath he is—get up, man, I'd scorn to touch you till you're on your legs; not all as one, for sure it's yourself would show me no such forbearance. Up with you, man alive, I've none of your thrachery in me. I'll not *rise* my cudgel till you're on your guard.'

"There was an expression of disdain, mingled with a glow of honest, manly generosity on his countenance, as he spoke, which made him at once the favourite with such spectators as were not connected with either of the parties. Grimes arose, and it was evident that Kelly's generosity deepened his resentment more than the blow which had sent him so rapidly to the ground; however, he was still cool, but his brows knit, his eye flashed with double fierceness, and his complexion settled into a dark blue shade, which gave to his whole visage an expression fearfully ferocious. Kelly hailed this as the first appearance of passion; his brow expanded as the other approached, and a dash of confidence, if not of triumph, softened in some degree the sternness of his features.

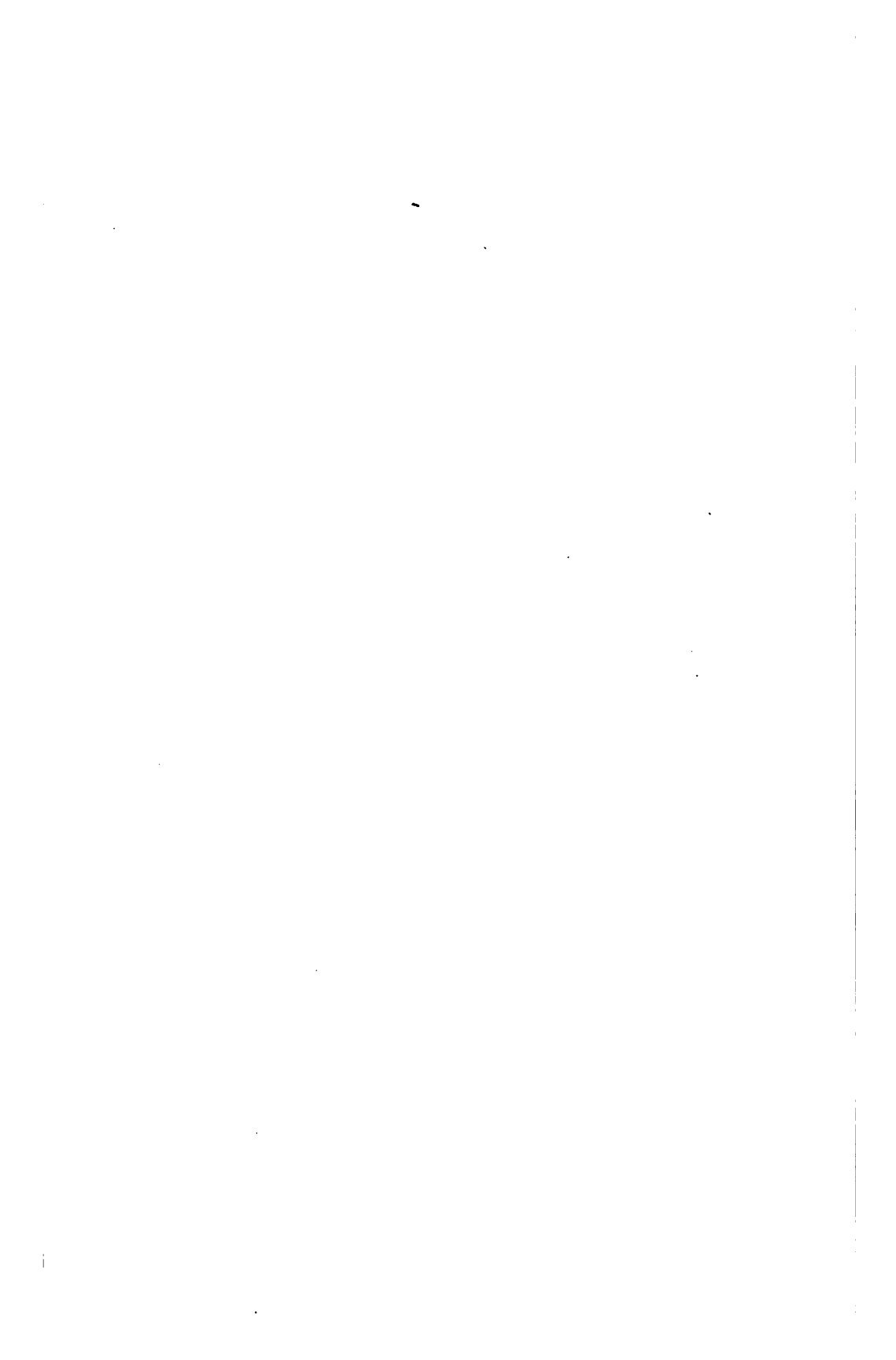
"With caution they encountered again, each collected for a spring, their eyes gleaming at each other like those of tigers. Grimes made a motion as if he would have struck Kelly with his fist; and, as the latter threw up his guard against the blow, he received a stroke from Grimes's cudgel in the under part of the right arm. This had been directed at his elbow, with an intention of rendering the arm powerless: it fell short, however, yet was sufficient to relax the grasp which Kelly had of his weapon. Had Kelly been a novice, this stratagem alone would have soon vanquished him; his address, however, was fully equal to that of his antagonist. The staff dropped instantly from his grasp, but a stout thong of black polished leather, with a shining tassel at the end of it, had bound it securely to his massive wrist; the cudgel, therefore, only dangled from his arm, and did not, as the other expected, fall to the ground, or put Denis to the necessity of stooping for it—Grimes's object being to have struck him in that attitude.

"A flash of indignation now shot from Kelly's eye, and with the speed of lightning he sprung within Grimes's weapon, determined to wrest it from him. The grapple that ensued was gigantic. In a moment Grimes's staff was parallel with the horizon between them, clutched in the powerful grasp of both. They stood exactly opposite, and rather close to each other; their arms sometimes stretched out stiff and at full length, again contracted, until their faces, glowing and distorted by the energy of the contest, were drawn almost together. Sometimes the prevailing strength of one would raise the staff slowly, and with gradually developed power.



But Kelly himself, his arms akimbo stood calmly over his enemy.

They, Kelly & Parnell, 1847-1848



up in a perpendicular position : again the reaction of opposing strength would strain it back, and sway the weighty frame of the antagonist, crouched and set into desperate resistance, along with it ; whilst the hard pebbles under their feet were crumbled into powder, and the very street itself furrowed into gravel by the shock of their opposing strength. Indeed, so well matched a pair never met in contest ; their strength, their wind, their activity, and their natural science appeared to be perfectly equal.

“ At length, by a tremendous effort, Kelly got the staff twisted nearly out of Grimes’s hand, and a short shout, half encouraging, half indignant, came from Grimes’s party. This added shame to his other passions, and threw an impulse of almost superhuman strength into him : he recovered his advantage, but nothing more ; they twisted—they heaved their great frames against each other—they struggled—their action became rapid—they swayed each other this way and that—their eyes like fire—their teeth locked, and their nostrils dilated. Sometimes they twined about each other like serpents, and twirled round with such rapidity, that it was impossible to distinguish them—sometimes, when a pull of more than ordinary power took place, they seemed to cling together almost without motion, bending down until their heads nearly touched the ground, their cracking joints seeming to stretch by the effort, and the muscles of their limbs standing out from the flesh, strung into amazing tension.

“ In this attitude were they, when Denis, with the eye of a hawk, spied a disadvantage in Grimes’s position ; he wheeled round, placed his broad shoulder against the shaggy breast of the other, and giving him what is called an ‘ inside crook,’ strained him, despite of every effort, until he got him off his shoulder, and off the point of resistance. There was a cry of alarm from the windows, particularly from the females, as Grimes’s huge body was swung over Kelly’s shoulder, until it came down in a crash upon the hard gravel of the street, while Denis stood in triumph, with his enemy’s staff in his hand. A loud huzza followed this from all present except the Orangemen, who stood bristling with fury and shame for the temporary defeat of their champion.

“ Denis again had his enemy at his mercy ; but he scorned to use his advantage ungenerously ; he went over, and placing the staff in his hands—for the other had got to his legs—retrograded to his place, and desired Grimes to defend himself.

“ After considerable manœuvring on both sides, Denis, who appeared to be the more active of the two, got an open on his antagonist, and by a powerful blow upon Grimes’s ear, sent him to the ground with amazing force. I never saw such a blow given by mortal ; the end of the cudgel came exactly upon the ear, and as Grimes went down, the blood spirted out of his mouth and nostrils ; he then kicked convulsively several times as he lay upon the ground, and that moment I really thought he would never have breathed more.

“ The shout was again raised by the Ribbonmen, who threw up their hats, and bounded from the ground with the most vehement exultation. Both parties then waited to give Grimes time to rise and renew the

battle ; but he appeared perfectly contented to remain where he was : for there appeared no signs of life or motion in him.

“ ‘Have you got your *gruel*, boy ?’ said Kelly, going over to where he lay ;—‘ Well, you met Denis Kelly, at last, didn’t you ? and there you lie ; but plase God, the most of your sort will soon lie in the same state. Come, boys,’ said Kelly, addressing his own party, ‘ now for bloody Vengeance and his crew, that thransported the Grogans and the Caf-fries, and murdered Collier. Now, boys, have at the murderers, and let us have satisfaction for all !’

“ A mutual rush instantly took place ; but, ere the Orangemen came down to where Grimes lay, Kelly had taken his staff, and handed it to one of his own party. It is impossible to describe the scene that ensued. The noise of the blows, the shouting, the yelling, the groans, the scalped heads, and gory visages, gave both to the eye an impression that could not easily be forgotten. The battle was obstinately maintained on both sides for nearly an hour, and with a skill of manœuvring, attack, and retreat, that was astonishing.

“ Both parties arranged themselves against each other, forming something like two lines of battle, and these extended along the town, nearly from one end to the other. It was curious to remark the difference in the persons and appearances of the combatants. In the Orange line, the men were taller and of more powerful frames ; but the Ribbonmen were more hardy, active, and courageous. Man to man, notwithstanding their superior bodily strength, the Orangemen could never fight the others ; the former depend too much upon their fire and side-arms, but they are by no means so well trained to the use of the cudgel as their enemies. In the district where the scene of this fight is laid, the Catholics generally inhabit the mountainous part of the country, to which, when the civil feuds of worse times prevailed, they had been driven at the point of the bayonet ; the Protestants and Presbyterians, on the other hand, who came in upon their possessions, occupy the richer and more fertile tracts of the land ; being more wealthy, they live with less labour, and on better food. The characteristic features produced by these causes are such as might be expected—the Catholic being, like his soil, hardy, thin, and capable of bearing all weathers ; and the Protestants, larger, softer, and more inactive.

“ Their advance to the first onset was far different from a faction fight. There existed a silence here, that powerfully evinced the inextinguishable animosity with which they encountered. For some time they fought in two compact bodies, that remained unbroken so long as the chances of victory were doubtful. Men went down, and were up, and went down in all directions, with uncommon rapidity ; and as the weighty phalanx of Orangemen stood out against the nimble line of their mountain adversaries, the intrepid spirit of the latter, and their surprising skill and activity soon gave symptoms of a gradual superiority in the conflict. In the course of about half an hour, the Orange party began to give way in the northern end of the town ; and, as their opponents pressed them warmly and with unsparing hand, the heavy mass formed by their numbers began to break, and this decomposition ran up their line until in a

short time they were thrown into utter confusion. They now fought in detached parties; but these subordinate conflicts, though shorter in duration than the shock of the general battle, were much more inhuman and destructive; for whenever any particular gang succeeded in putting their adversaries to flight, they usually ran to the assistance of their friends in the nearest fight—by which means they often fought three to one. In these instances the persons inferior in number suffered such barbarities, as it would be painful to detail.

There lived a short distance out of the town a man nicknamed Jemmy Boccagh, on account of his lameness—he was also sometimes called ‘Hop-an’-go-constant,’ who fell the first victim to party spirit. He had got arms on seeing his friends likely to be defeated, and had the hardihood to follow, with charged bayonet, a few Ribbonmen, whom he attempted to intercept, as they fled from a large number of their enemies, who had got them separated from their comrades. Boccagh ran across a field, in order to get before them in the road, and was in the act of climbing a ditch, when one of them, who carried a spade-shaft, struck him a blow on the head, which put an end to his existence*.

“This circumstance imparted, of course, fiercer hatred to both parties, —triumph inspiring the one, a thirst for vengeance nerving the other. Kelly inflicted tremendous punishment in every direction; for scarcely a blow fell from him which did not bring a man to the ground. It absolutely resembled a military engagement, for the number of combatants amounted at least to four thousand men. In many places the street was covered with small pools and clots of blood, which flowed from those who lay insensible—while others were borne away bleeding, groaning, or staggering, having been battered into a total unconsciousness of the scene about them.

“At length the Orangemen gave way, and their enemies, yelling with madness and revenge, began to beat them with unrestrained fury. The former, finding that they could not resist the impetuous tide which burst upon them, fled back past the church, and stopped not until they had reached an elevation, on which lay two or three heaps of stones, that had been collected for the purpose of paving the streets. Here they made a stand, and commenced a vigorous discharge of them against their pursuers. This checked the latter; and the others, seeing them hesitate and likely to retreat from the missiles, pelted them with such effect, that the tables became turned, and the Ribbonmen made a speedy flight back into the town.

“In the meantime several Orangemen had gone into Sherlock’s, where a considerable number of arms had been deposited, with an intention of resorting to them in case of a defeat at the cudgels. These now came out, and met the Ribbonmen on their flight from those who were pelting them with the stones. A dreadful scene ensued. The Ribbonmen, who had the advantage in numbers, finding themselves intercepted before by those

* Fact. The person who killed him escaped to America where he got himself naturalised, and when the British government claimed him, he pleaded his privilege of being an American citizen, and he was consequently not given up. Boccagh was a very violent orangeman, and a very offensive one.

who had arms, and pursued behind by those who had recourse to the stones, fought with uncommon bravery and desperation. Kelly, who was furious, but still collected and decisive, shouted out in Irish, lest the opposite party might understand him, 'Let every *two* men seize upon *one* of those who have the arms.'

"This was attempted, and effected with partial success; and I have no doubt but the Orangemen would have been ultimately beaten and deprived of their weapons, were it not that many of them, who had got their pistols out of Sherlock's, discharged them among their enemies, and wounded several. The Catholics could not stand this; but, wishing to retaliate as effectually as possible, lifted stones wherever they could find them, and kept up the fight at a distance, as they retreated. On both sides, wherever a solitary foe was caught straggling from the rest, he was instantly punished with a most cruel and blood-thirsty spirit.

"It was just about this time that I saw Kelly engaged with two men, whom he kept at bay with great ease—retrograding, however, as he fought, towards his own party. Grimes, who had for some time before this recovered and joined the fight once more, was returning, after having pursued several of the Ribbonmen past the market-house, where he spied Kelly thus engaged. With a Volunteer gun in his hand, and furious with the degradation of his former defeat, he ran over and struck him with the butt-end of it upon the temple—and Denis fell. When the stroke was given, an involuntary cry of 'Murder,—foul, foul!' burst from those who looked on from the windows; and long John Steele, Grimes's father-in-law, in indignation, raised his cudgel to knock him down for this treacherous and malignant blow;—but a person out of Neal Cassidy's back-yard hurled a round stone, about six pounds in weight, at Grimes's head, that felled him to the earth, leaving him as insensible, and nearly in as dangerous a state as Kelly,—for his jaw was broken.

"By this time the Catholics had retreated out of the town, and Denis might probably have received more punishment, had those who were returning from the pursuit recognised him; but James Wilson, seeing the dangerous situation in which he lay, came out, and, with the assistance of his servant-man, brought him into his own house. When the Orangemen had driven their adversaries off the field, they commenced the most hideous yellings through the streets—got music, and played party tunes—offered any money for the face of a Papist; and any of that religion who were so unfortunate as to make their appearance, were beaten in the most relentless manner. It was precisely the same thing on the part of the Ribbonmen; if a Protestant, but above all, an Orangeman, came in their way, he was sure to be treated with barbarity; for the retaliation on either side was dreadfully unjust—the innocent suffering as well as the guilty. Leaving the window, I found Kelly in a bad state below stairs.

"'What's to be done?' said I to Wilson.

"'I know not,' replied he, 'except I put him between us on my jaunting car, and drive him home.'

"This appeared decidedly the best plan we could adopt; so, after putting to the horse, we placed him on the car, sitting one on each side of him, and, in this manner, left him at his own house."

“ ‘Did you run no risk,’ said I, ‘in going among Kelly’s friends, whilst they were under the influence of party feeling and exasperated passion?’

“ ‘No,’ said he; ‘we had rendered many of them acts of kindness, and had never exhibited any spirit but a *friendly* one towards them; and such individuals, but only such, *might walk through a crowd of enraged Catholics or Protestants quite unmolested.*’

“The next morning Kelly’s landlord, Sir W. R——, and two magistrates, were at his house, but he lay like a log, without sense or motion. Whilst they were there, the Surgeon arrived, and, after examining his head, declared that the skull was fractured. During that and the following day, the house was surrounded by crowds, anxious to know his state; and nothing might be heard amongst most of them but loud and undisguised expressions of the most ample revenge. The wife was frantic; and, on seeing me, hid her face in her hands, exclaiming,

“ ‘Ah, Sir, I knew it would come to this; and you, too, tould him the same thing. *My curse and God’s curse on it for quarrelling!* Will it never stop in the counthry till they rise some time and murder one another out of the face?’

“As soon as the swelling in his head was reduced, the Surgeon performed the operation of trepanning, and thereby saved his life; but his strength and intellect were gone, and he just lingered for four months, a feeble, drivelling simpleton, until, in consequence of a cold, which produced inflammation in the brain, he died, as hundreds have died before, the victim of party spirit.”

Such was the account which I heard of my old school-fellow, Denis Kelly; and, indeed, when I reflected upon the nature of the education he received, I could not but admit that the consequences were such as might naturally be expected to result from it.

The next morning a relation of Mrs. Kelly’s came down to my brother, hoping that, as they wished to have as decent a funeral as possible, he would be so kind as to attend it.

“Musha, God knows, sir,” said the man, “it’s poor Denis, heavens be his bed! that had the regard and reverence for every one, young and ould, of your father’s family; and it’s himself that would be the proud man, if he was living, to see you, sir, riding after his coffin.”

“Well,” said my brother, “let Mrs. Kelly know that I shall certainly attend, and so will my brother, here, who has come to pay me a visit.—Why, I believe, Tom, you forget him!”

“Your brother, sir! Is it Master Toby, that used to cudgel the half of the counthry when he was at school? Gad’s my life, *Masther* Toby, (I was now about thirty-six) but it’s your four quarters, sure enough! Arrah, thin, sir, who’d think it—you’re grown so full and stout?—but, faix, you’d always the bone in you! Ah, *Masther* Toby!” said he, “he’s lying cowl’d, this morning, that would be the happy man to lay his eyes wandst more upon you. Many an’ many’s the winther’s evening did he spind, talking about the time when you and he were *bouchals* *

together, and of the pranks you played at school, but especially of the time you both leathered the four Grogans, and tuck the apples from them—my poor fellow!—and now to be stretched a corpse, lavin' his poor widdy and childher behind him!"

I accordingly expressed my sorrow for Denis's death, which, indeed, I sincerely regretted, for he possessed materials for an excellent character, had not all that was amiable and good in him been permitted to run wild.

As soon as my trunk and travelling-bag had been brought from the inn, where I had left them the preceding night, we got our horses, and, as we wished to show particular respect to Denis's remains, rode up, with some of our friends, to the house. When we approached, there were large crowds of the country-people before the door of his well-thatched and respectable-looking dwelling, which had three chimneys, and a set of sash-windows, clean and well glazed. On our arrival, I was soon recognised and surrounded by numbers of those to whom I had formerly been known, who received and welcomed me with a warmth of kindness and sincerity, which it would be in vain to look for among the peasantry of any other nation.

Indeed, I have uniformly observed, that when no religious or political feeling influences the heart and principles of an Irish peasant, he is singularly sincere and faithful in his attachments, and has always a bias to the generous and the disinterested. To my own knowledge, circumstances frequently occur, in which the ebullition of party spirit is altogether temporary, subsiding after the cause that produced it has passed away, and leaving the kind peasant to the natural, affectionate, and generous impulses of his character. But poor *Paddy*, unfortunately, is as combustible a material in politics or religion, as in fighting—thinking it his duty to take the weak * side, without any other consideration, than because it is the weak side.

When we entered the house I was almost suffocated with the strong fumes of tobacco-smoke, snuff, and whiskey; and as I had been an old school-fellow of Denis's, my appearance was the signal for a general burst of grief among his relations, in which the more distant friends and neighbours of the deceased joined, to keep up the *keening*.

I have often, indeed always, felt that there is something extremely touching in the Irish cry; in fact, that it breathes the very spirit of wild and natural sorrow. The Irish peasantry, whenever a death takes place, are exceedingly happy in seizing upon any contingent circumstances that may occur, and making them subservient to the excitement of grief for the departed, or the exaltation and praise of his character and virtues. My entrance was a proof of this—I had scarcely advanced to the middle of the floor, when my intimacy with the deceased, our boyish sports,

* A gentleman once told me an anecdote, of which he was an eye-witness. Some peasants, belonging to opposite factions, had met under peculiar circumstances; there were, however, two on one side, and four on the other—in this case, there was likely to be no fight; but, in order to balance the number, one of the more numerous party joined the weak side—"bekase, boys, it would be a burnin' shame, so it would, for four to kick two; and, except I join them, by the powers, there's no chance of there being a bit of sport, or a row, at all at all!" Accordingly, he did join them, and the result of it was, that he and his party were victorious; so honestly did he fight!

and even our quarrels, were adverted to with a natural eloquence and pathos, that, in spite of my firmness, occasioned me to feel the prevailing sorrow. They spoke, or chaunted mournfully, in Irish; but the substance of what they said was as follows:—

“ Oh, Denia, Denia, avourneen! you're lying low, this morning of sorrow!—lying low are you, and does not know who it is (alluding to me) that is standing over you, weeping for the days you spent together in your youth! It's yourself, *acushla agus asthore machree* (the pulse and beloved of my heart), that would stretch out the right hand warmly to welcome him to the place of his birth, where you had both been so often happy about the green hills and valleys with each other! He's here now, standing over you; and it's he, of all his family, kind and respectable as they are, that was your own favourite, Denia, *avourneen dholish!* He alone was the companion that you loved!—with no other could you be happy!—For him did you fight, when he wanted a friend in your young quarrels! and if you had a dispute with him, were you not sorry for it? Are you not now stretched in death before him, and will he not forgive you?”

All this was uttered, of course, extemporaneously, and without the least preparation. They then passed on to an enumeration of his virtues as a father, a husband, son, and brother—specified his worth as he stood related to society in general, and his kindness as a neighbour and a friend.

An occurrence now took place which may serve, in some measure, to throw light upon many of the atrocities and outrages which take place in Ireland. Before I mention it, however, I think it necessary to make a few observations relative to it. I am convinced that those who are intimately acquainted with the Irish peasantry, will grant that there is not on the earth a class of people in whom the domestic affections of blood-relationship are so pure, strong, and sacred. The birth of a child will occasion a poor man to break in upon the money set apart for his landlord, in order to keep the christening, surrounded by his friends and neighbours, with due festivity. A marriage exhibits a spirit of joy, an exuberance of happiness and delight, to be found only in the Green Island; and the death of a member of a family is attended with a sincerity of grief, scarcely to be expected from men so much the creatures of the more mirthful feelings. In fact, their sorrow is a solecism in humanity—at once deep and loud—mingled up, even in its deepest paroxysms, with a laughter-loving spirit. It is impossible that an Irishman, sunk in the lowest depths of affliction, could permit his grief to flow in all its sad solemnity, even for a day, without some glimpse of his natural humour throwing a faint and rapid light over the gloom within him. No: there is an amalgamation of sentiments in his mind which, as I said before, would puzzle any philosopher to account for. Yet it would be wrong to say, though his grief has something of an unsettled and ludicrous character about it, that he is incapable of the most subtle and delicate shades of sentiment, or the deepest and most desolating intensity of sorrow. But he laughs off those heavy vapours which hang about the moral constitution of the people of other nations, giving them a morbid habit, which leaves them neither strength nor firmness to resist calamity—which they feel

loss keenly than an Irishman, exactly as a healthy man will feel the pangs of death with more acuteness than one who is wasted away by debility and decay. Let any man witness an emigration, and he will satisfy himself that this is true. I am convinced that Goldsmith's inimitable description of one in his "Deserted Village," was a picture drawn from actual observation. Let him observe the emigrant, as he crosses the Atlantic, and he will find, although he joins the jest, and the laugh, and the song, that he will seek a silent corner or a silent hour, to indulge the sorrow which he still feels for the friends, the companions, and the native fields that he has left behind him. This constitution of mind is beneficial: the Irishman seldom or never hangs himself, because he is capable of too much real feeling to permit himself to become the slave of that which is factitious. There is no void in his affections or sentiments, which a morbid and depraved sensibility could occupy; but his feelings, of what character soever they may be, are strong, because they are fresh and healthy. For this reason, I maintain, that when the domestic affections come under the influence of either grief or joy, the peasantry of no nation are capable of feeling so deeply. Even on the ordinary occasions of death, sorrow, though it alternates with mirth and cheerfulness, in a manner peculiar to themselves, lingers long in the unseen recesses of domestic life: *any hand therefore, whether by law or violence, that plants a wound HERE, will suffer to the death.*

When my brother and I entered the house, the body had just been put into the coffin; and it is usual after this takes place, and before it is nailed down, for the immediate relatives of the family to embrace the deceased, and take their last look and farewell of his remains. In the present instance, the children were brought over, one by one, to perform that trying and melancholy ceremony. The first was an infant on the breast, whose little innocent mouth was held down to that of its dead father; the babe smiled upon his still and solemn features, and would have played with his grave-clothes, but that the murmur of unfeigned sorrow, which burst from all present, occasioned it to be removed. The next was a fine little girl, of three or four years, who inquired where they were going to bring her daddy, and asked if he would not soon come back to *her*.

"My daddy's sleeping a long time," said the child, "but I'll waken him till he sings me 'Peggy Slevin.' I like my daddy best, bekase I sleep wid him—and he brings me good things from the fair; he bought me this ribbon," said she, pointing to a ribbon which he had purchased for her.

The rest of the children were sensible of their loss, and truly it was a distressing scene. His eldest son and daughter, the former about fourteen, the latter about two years older, lay on the coffin, kissing his lips, and were with difficulty torn away from it.

"Oh!" said the boy, "he is going from us, and night or day we will never see him or hear him more! Oh! father—father—is that the last sight we are ever to see of your face? Why, father dear, did you die, and leave us for ever?—for ever—wasn't your heart good to us, and your words kind to us—Oh! your last smile is smiled—your last kiss given—and your last kind word spoken to your childre that you loved, and that

loved you as we did. Father, core of my heart, are you gone for ever, and your voice departed? Oh! the murderers, oh! the murderers, the murderers!" he exclaimed, "that killed my father; for only for them, he would be still wid us: but, by the God that's over me, if I live, night or day I will not rest, till I have blood for blood; nor do I care who hears it, nor if I was hanged the next minute."*

As these words escaped him, a deep and awful murmur of suppressed vengeance burst from his relations. At length their sorrow became too strong to be repressed; and as it was the time to take their last embrace and look of him, they came up, and after fixing their eyes on his face in deep affliction, their lips began to quiver, and their countenances became convulsed. They then burst out simultaneously into a tide of violent grief, which, after having indulged in it for some time, they checked. But the resolution of revenge was stronger than their grief, for, standing over his dead body, they repeated, almost word for word, the vow of vengeance which the son had just sworn. It was really a scene dreadfully and terribly solemn; and I could not avoid reflecting upon the mystery of nature, which can, from the deep power of domestic affection, cause to spring a determination to crime of so black a dye. Would to God that our peasantry had a clearer sense of moral and religious duties, and were not left so much as they are to the headlong impulse of an ardent temperament, and an impetuous character; and would to God that the clergy who superintend their morals, had a better knowledge of human nature, and a more liberal education!

During all this time the heart-broken widow sat beyond the coffin, looking upon what passed with a stupid sense of bereavement; and when they had all performed this last ceremony, it was found necessary to tell her that the time was come for the procession of the funeral, and that they only waited for her to take, as the rest did, her last look and embrace of her husband. When she heard this, it pierced her like an arrow: she became instantly collected, and her complexion assumed a dark shade of despairing anguish, which it was an affliction even to look upon. She then stooped over the coffin, and kissed him several times, after which she ceased sobbing, and lay silently with her mouth to his.

The character of a faithful wife sorrowing for a beloved husband has that in it which compels both respect and sympathy. There was not at this moment a dry eye in the house. She still lay silent on the coffin; but, as I observed that her bosom seemed not to heave as it did a little before, I was convinced that she had become insensible. I accordingly beckoned to Kelly's brother, to whom I mentioned what I had suspected; and, on his going over to ascertain the truth, he found her as I had said. She was then brought to the air, and after some trouble recovered; but I recommended them to put her to bed, and not to subject her to any unnecessary anguish, by a custom which was really too soul-piercing to endure. This, however, was, in her opinion, the violation of an old rite, sacred to her heart and affections—she would not hear of it for an instant.

* Such were the words.

Again she was helped out between her brother and brother-in-law ; and, after stooping down, and doing as the others had done—

“ Now,” said she, “ I will sit here, and keep him under my eye as long as I can—surely you won’t blame me for it ; you all know the kind husband he was to me, and the good right I have to be sorry for him ! Oh !” she added, “ is it thru at all ?—is he, my own Denis, the young husband of my early—and my first love, in good airnest, dead, and going to leave me here—me, Denis, that you loved so tindherly, and our childher, that your brow was never clouded against ? Can I believe myself, or is it a dhrame ? Denis, *avick machree ! avick machree !* * your hand was dreaded, and a good right it had, for it was the manly hand, that was ever and always raised in defence of them that wanted a friend ; abroad, in the faction-fight, against the oppressor, your name was ever feared, *acushla ?*—but *at home*—AT HOME—*where was your fellow ?* Denis aghra, do you know the lips that’s spaking to you ?—your young bride—your heart’s light—Oh ! I remimber the day you war married to me like yesterday. Oh ! avourneen, then and since wasn’t the heart of your own Honor bound up in you—yet not a word even to me. Well, aghra machree, ’tisan’t your fault, it’s the first time you ever refused to spake to your own Honor. But you’re dead, avourneen, or it wouldn’t be so—you’re dead before my eyes—husband of my heart, and all my hopes and happiness goes into the coffin and the grave along wid you, for ever !”

All this time she was rocking herself from side to side, her complexion pale and ghastly as could be conceived, and the tears streaming from her eyes. When the coffin was about to be closed, she retired until it was nailed down, after which she returned with her bonnet and cloak on her, ready to accompany it to the grave. I was astonished—for I thought she could not have walked two steps without assistance ; but it was the custom, and to neglect it, I found, would have thrown the imputation of insincerity upon her grief. While they were preparing to bring the coffin out, I could hear the chat and conversation of those who were standing in crowds before the door, and occasionally a loud, vacant laugh, and sometimes a volley of them, responsive to the jokes of some rustic wit, probably the same person who acted master of the revels at the wake.

Before the coffin was finally closed, Ned Corrigan, whom I had put to flight the preceding night, came up, and repeated the *De Profundis*†, in very strange Latin, over the corpse. When this was finished, he got a jug of holy water, and after dipping his thumb in it, first made the sign of the cross upon his own forehead, and afterwards sprinkled it upon all present, giving my brother and myself an extra compliment, supposing, probably, that we stood most in need of it. When this was over, he sprinkled the corpse and the coffin in particular most profusely. He then placed two pebbles from Lough Derg ‡, and a bit of holy candle, upon

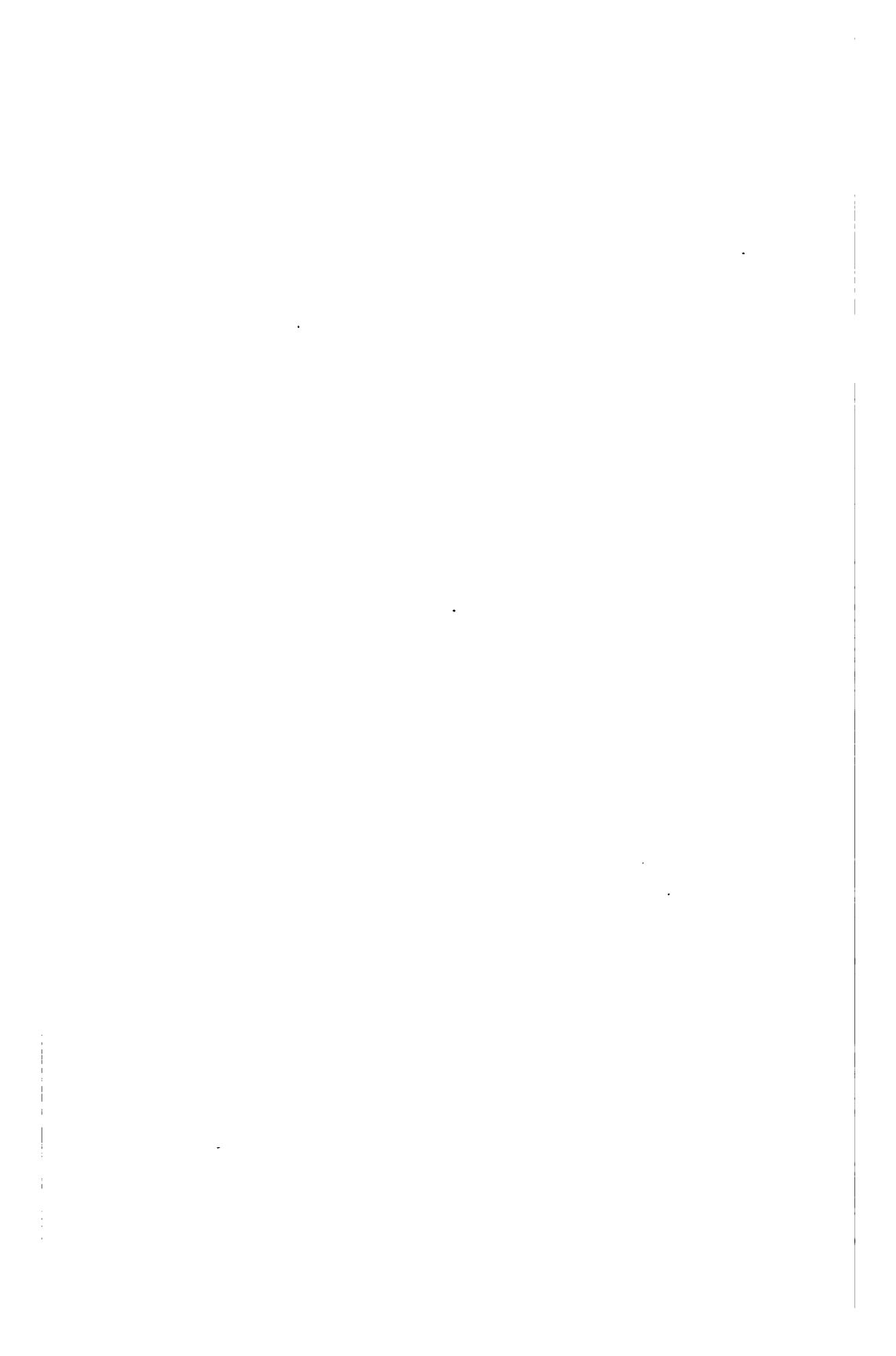
* Son of my heart ! Son of my heart !

† The *De profundis* is the psalm which in the Roman Catholic Church is repeated over the dead.

‡ Those who make a Station at Lough Derg are in the habit of bringing home some of its pebbles, which are considered to be sacred and possessed of many virtues.



M^{rs} Kelly lamenting over her husband's coffin.



the breast of the corpse, and having said a *Pater* and *Ave*, in which he was joined by the people, he closed the lid, and nailed it down.

"Ned," said his brother, "are his feet and toes loose?"

"Musha, but that's more than myself knows," replied Ned—"Are they, Katty?" said he, inquiring from the sister of the deceased.

"Arrah, to be sure, avourneen!" answered Katty—"do you think we would lave him to be tied that way, when he'd be risin' out of his last bed at the day of judgment? Wouldn't it be too bad to have his toes tied thin, avourneen?"

The coffin was then brought out and placed upon four chairs before the door, to be keened; and, in the mean time, the friends and well-wishers of the deceased were brought into the room to get each a glass of whiskey, as a token of respect. I observed also, that such as had not seen any of Kelly's relations until then, came up, and shaking hands with them, said—"I'm sorry for your loss!" This expression of condolence was uniform, and the usual reply was,—“Thank you, Mat, or Jim!” with a pluck of the skirt, accompanied by a significant nod, to follow. They then got a due share of whiskey; and it was curious, after they came out, their faces a little flushed, and their eyes watery with the strong, ardent spirits, to hear with what heartiness and alacrity they entered into Denis's praises.

When he had been keened in the street, there being no hearse, the coffin was placed upon two *mand-oikes*, which were fixed across, but parallel to each other under it. These were borne by four men, one at the end of each, with the point of it crossing his body a little below his stomach; in other parts of Ireland, the coffin is borne upon a bier on the shoulders, but this is more convenient and less distressing.

When we got out upon the road, the funeral was of great extent—for Kelly had been highly respected. On arriving at the *merin* which bounded the land he had owned, the coffin was laid down, and a loud and wailing *keene* took place over it. It was again raised, and the funeral proceeded in a direction which I was surprised to see it take, and it was not until an acquaintance of my brother's had explained the matter that I understood the cause of it. In Ireland when a murder is perpetrated, it is sometimes usual, as the funeral proceeds to the grave-yard, to bring the corpse to the house of him who committed the crime, and lay it down at his door, while the relations of the deceased kneel down, and, with an appalling solemnity, utter the deepest imprecations, and invoke the justice of heaven on the head of the murderer. This, however, is generally omitted if the residence of the criminal be completely out of the line of the funeral, but if it be possible, by any circuit, to approach it, this dark ceremony is never omitted. In cases where the crime is doubtful, or unjustly imputed, those who are thus visited come out, and laying their right hand upon the coffin, protest their innocence of the blood of the deceased, calling God to witness the truth of their asseverations; but, in cases where the crime is clearly proved against the murderer, the door is either closed, the ceremony repelled by violence, or the house abandoned by the inmates until the funeral passes.*

* Many of these striking and startling old customs have nearly disappeared, and indeed it is better that they should.

The death of Kelly, however, could not be actually, or, at least, directly, considered a murder, for it was probable that Grimes did not inflict the stroke with an intention of taking away his life, and, besides, Kelly survived it four months. Grimes's house was not more than fifteen perches from the road: and when the corpse was opposite the little bridle-way that led up to it, they laid it down for a moment, and the relations of Kelly surrounded it, offering up a short prayer, with uncovered heads. It was then borne toward the house, whilst the keening commenced in a loud and wailing cry, accompanied with clapping of hands, and every other symptom of external sorrow. But, independent of their compliance with this ceremony, as an old usage, there is little doubt that the appearance of any thing connected with the man who certainly occasioned Kelly's death, awoke a keener and more intense sorrow for his loss. The wailing was thus continued until the coffin was laid opposite Grimes's door; nor did it cease then, but, on the contrary, was renewed with louder and more bitter lamentations.

As the multitude stood compassionating the affliction of the widow and orphans, it was the most impressive and solemn spectacle that could be witnessed. The very house seemed to have a condemned look; and, as a single wintry breeze waved a tuft of long grass that grew on a seat of turf at the side of the door, it brought the vanity of human enmity before my mind with melancholy force. When the keening ceased, Kelly's wife, with her children, knelt, their faces towards the house of their enemy, and invoked, in the strong language of excited passion, the justice of heaven upon the head of the man who had left her a widow, and her children fatherless. I was anxious to know if Grimes would appear to disclaim the intention of murder; but I understood that he was at market—for it happened to be market-day.

"Come out!" said the widow—"come out, and look at the sight that's here before you! Come and view *your own work!* Lay but your hand upon the coffin, and the blood of him you murdered will spout, before God and these Christian people, in your guilty face! But, oh! may the Almighty God bring *this home to you!*"—May you never lave this life, John Grimes, till worse nor has overtaken me and mine falls upon you and yours! May our curse light upon you this day!—the curse, I say, of the widow and the orphans, that your bloody hand has made us, may it blast you! May you, and all belonging to you wither off of the 'airth! Night and day, sleeping and waking—like snow off the ditch may you melt, until your name and your place be disremembered, except to be cursed by them that will hear of you and your hand of murder! Amin, we pray God this day!—and the widow and orphan's prayer will not fall to the ground while your guilty head is above it! Childre, did you all say it?"

At this moment a deep, terrific murmur, or rather ejaculation, corroborative of assent to this dreadful imprecation, pervaded the crowd in a fearful manner; their countenances darkened, their eyes gleamed,

* Does not this usage illustrate the proverb of the guilt being brought home to a man, when there is no doubt of his criminality?

and their scowling visages stiffened into an expression of determined vengeance.

When these awful words were uttered, Grimes's wife and daughters approached the window in tears, sobbing, at the same time, loudly and bitterly.

"You're wrong," said the wife—"you're wrong, Widow Kelly, in saying that my husband *murdered* him!—he did *not* murder him; for, when you and yours were far from him, I heard John Grimes declare before the God who's to judge him, that he had no thought or intention of taking his life; he struck him in anger, and the blow did him an injury that was not intended. Don't curse him, Honor Kelly," said she, "don't curse him so fearfully; but, above all, don't curse me and my innocent childher, for *we* never harmed you, nor wished you ill! *But it was this party work did it!* Oh, my God!" she exclaimed, wringing her hands in utter bitterness of spirit, "when will it be ended between friends and neighbours, that ought to live in love and kindness together instead of fighting in this blood-thirsty manner!"

She then wept more violently, as did her daughters.

"May God give me mercy in the last day, Mrs. Kelly, as I pity from my heart and soul you and your orphans," she continued; "but don't curse us, for the love of God—for you know we should forgive our enemies, as we ourselves, that are the enemies of God, hope to be forgiven."

"May God forgive me, then, if I have wronged you or your husband," said the widow, softened by their distress; "but you know, that whether he intended his life or not, the stroke he gave him has left my childher without a father, and myself dissolate. Oh, heavens above me!" she exclaimed, in a scream of distraction and despair, "is it possible—is it throe—that my manly husband—the best father that ever breathed the breath of life—my own Denis, is lying dead—murdered before my eyes? Put your hands on my head, some of you—put your hands on my head, or it will go to pieces. Where are you, Denis—where are you, the strong of hand, and the tender of heart? Come to me, darling, I want you in my distress. I want comfort, Denis; and I'll take it from none but yourself, for kind was your word to me in all my afflictions!"

All present were affected; and, indeed, it was difficult to say, whether Kelly's wife or Grimes's was more to be pitied at the moment. The affliction of the latter and of her daughters was really pitiable; their sobs were loud, and the tears streamed down their cheeks like rain. When the widow's exclamations had ceased, or rather were lost in the loud cry of sorrow which were uttered by the keeners and friends of the deceased—they, too, standing somewhat apart from the rest, joined in it bitterly; and the solitary wail of Mrs. Grimes differing in character from that of those who had been trained to modulate the most profound grief into strains of a melancholy nature, was particularly wild and impressive. At all events, her Christian demeanour, joined to the sincerity of her grief, appeased the enmity of many; so true is it that a soft answer turneth away wrath. I could perceive, however, that the resentment of Kelly's male relations did not appear to be in any degree moderated.

The funeral again proceeded, and I remarked that whenever a strange passenger happened to meet it, he always turned back, and accompanied it for a short distance, after which he resumed his journey, it being considered unlucky to omit this usage on meeting a funeral. Denis's residence was not more than two miles from the churchyard, which was situated in the town where he had received the fatal blow. As soon as we had got on about the half of this way, the priest of the parish met us, and the funeral, after proceeding a few perches more, turned into a green field, in the corner of which stood a table with the apparatus for saying mass spread upon it.

The coffin was then laid down once more, immediately before this temporary altar; and the priest, after having robed himself, the wrong or sable side of the vestments out, as is usual in the case of death, began to celebrate mass for the dead, the congregation all kneeling. When this was finished, the friends of the deceased approached the altar, and after some private conversation, the priest turned round, and inquired aloud—

“Who will give *Offerings*?”

The people were acquainted with the manner in which this matter is conducted, and accordingly knew what to do. When the priest put the question, Denis's brother, who was a wealthy man, came forward, and laid down two guineas on the altar; the priest took this up, and putting it on a plate, set out among the multitude, accompanied by two or three of those who were best acquainted with the inhabitants of the parish. He thus continued putting the question, distinctly, after each man had paid; and according as the money was laid down, those who accompanied the priest pronounced the name of the person who gave it, so that all present might hear it. This is also done to enable the friends of the deceased to know not only those who show them this mark of respect, but those who neglect it, in order that they may treat them in the same manner on similar occasions. The amount of money so received is very great; for there is a kind of emulation among the people, as to who will act with most decency and spirit, that is exceedingly beneficial to the priest. In such instances the difference of religion is judiciously overlooked; for although the prayers of Protestants are declined on those occasions, yet it seems the same objection does not hold good against their money, and accordingly they pay as well as the rest. When the priest came round to where I stood, he shook hands with my brother, with whom he appeared to be on very friendly and familiar terms; he and I were then introduced to each other.

“Come,” said he, with a very droll expression of countenance, shaking the plate at the same time up near my brother's nose—“Come, Mr. D'Arcy, down with your offerings, if you wish to have a friend with St. Peter when you go as far as the gates; down with your money, sir, and you shall be remembered, depend upon it.”

“Ah!” said my brother, pulling out a guinea, “I would with the greatest pleasure; but I fear this guinea is not orthodox. I'm afraid it has the heretical mark upon it.”

“In that case,” replied his reverence laughing heartily, “your only plan is to return it to the bosom of the church, by laying it on the plate here—it will then be *within the vail*, you know.”

This reply produced a great deal of good-humour among that part of the crowd which immediately surrounded them—not excepting his nearest relations, who laughed heartily.

“Well,” said my brother, as he laid it on the plate, “how many prayers will you offer up in my favour for this?”

“Leave *that* to myself,” said his Reverence, looking at the *money*; “it will be before you, I say, when you go to St. Peter.”

He then held the plate over to me in a droll manner; and I added another guinea to my brother’s gift; for which I had the satisfaction of having my name called out so loud, that it might be heard a quarter of a mile off.

“God bless you, sir,” said the priest, “and I thank you.”

“John,” said I, when he left us, “I think that is a pleasant, and rather a sensible man?”

“He’s as jovial a soul,” replied my brother, “as ever gave birth to a jest, and he sings a right good song. Many a convivial hour have he and I spent together; and a more hospitable man besides, never yet existed. Although firmly attached to his own religion, he is no bigot; but, on the contrary, an excellent, liberal, and benevolent man.”

When the offerings were all collected, he returned to the altar, repeated a few additional prayers in prime style—as rapid as lightning; and after hastily shaking the holy water on the crowd, the funeral moved on. It was now two o’clock, the day clear and frosty, and the sun unusually bright for the season. During mass, many were added to those who formed the funeral train at the outset; so that, when we got out upon the road, the procession appeared very large. After this, few or none joined it; for it is esteemed by no means “*dacent*” to do so *after* mass, because, in that case, the matter is ascribed to an evasion of the offerings; but those whose delay has not really been occasioned by this motive, make it a point to pay them at the grave-yard, or after the interment, and sometimes even on the following day—so jealous are the peasantry of having any degrading suspicion attached to their generosity.

The order of the funeral now was as follows:—Foremost the women—next to them the corpse, surrounded by the relations—the eldest son, in deep affliction, “led the coffin,” as chief mourner, holding in his hand the corner of a sheet or piece of linen, fastened to the *mort-cloth*, called moor-cloth. After the coffin came those who were on foot, and in the rear were the equestrians. When we were a quarter of a mile from the churchyard, the funeral was met by a dozen of singing-boys, belonging to a chapel choir, which the priest, who was fond of music, had some time before formed. They fell in, two by two, immediately behind the corpse, and commenced singing the *Requiem*, or Latin hymn for the dead.

The scene through which we passed at this time, though not clothed with the verdure and luxuriant beauty of summer, was, nevertheless, marked by that solemn and decaying splendour which characterises a fine country, lit up by the melancholy light of a winter setting sun. It was, therefore, much more in character with the occasion. Indeed I felt it altogether beautiful; and, as the “dying day-hymn stole aloft,” the dim sun-beams fell, through a vista of naked motionless trees, upon the coffin,

which was borne with a slower and more funereal pace than before, in a manner that threw a solemn and visionary light upon the whole procession. This, however, was raised to something dreadfully impressive, when the long train, thus proceeding with a motion so mournful, was seen, each, or at least the majority of them, covered with a profusion of crimson ribbons, to indicate that the corpse they bore owed his death to a deed of murder*. The circumstance of the sun glancing his rays upon the coffin was not unobserved by the peasantry, who considered it as a good omen to the spirit of the departed.

As we went up the street which had been the scene of the quarrel that proved so fatal to Kelly, the coffin was again laid down on the spot where he received his death-blow; and, as was usual, the wild and melancholy *keene* was raised. My brother saw many of Grime's friends among the spectators, but he himself was not visible. Whether Kelly's party saw them or not, we could not say; if they did, they seemed not to notice them, for no expression of revenge or indignation escaped them.

At length, we entered the last receptacle of the dead. The coffin was now placed upon the shoulders of the son and brothers of the deceased, and borne round the churchyard; whilst the priest, with his stole upon him, preceded it, reading prayers for the eternal repose of the soul. Being then laid beside the grave, a "De profundis" was repeated by the priest and the mass-server; after which a portion of fresh clay, carried from the fields, was brought to his Reverence, who read a prayer over it, and consecrated it. This is a ceremony which is never omitted at the interment of a Roman Catholic. When it was over, the coffin was lowered into the grave, and the blessed clay shaken over it. The priest now took the shovel in his own hands, and threw in the three first shovelful—one in the name of the Father, one in the name of the Son, and one in the name of the Holy Ghost. The sexton then took it, and in a short time Denis Kelly was fixed for ever in his narrow bed.

While these ceremonies were going forward, the churchyard presented a characteristic picture. Beside the usual groups who straggle through the place, to amuse themselves by reading the inscriptions on the tombs, you might see many individuals kneeling on particular graves, where some relation lay—for the benefit of whose soul they offered up their prayers with an attachment and devotion which one cannot but admire. Sometimes all the surviving members of the family would assemble, and repeat a *Rosary* for the same purpose. Again, you might see an unhappy woman beside a newly-made grave, giving way to lamentation and sorrow for the loss of a husband, or of some beloved child. Here, you might observe the "last bed" ornamented with hoops, decked in white paper, emblematic of the virgin innocence of the individual who slept below;—there, a little board-cross informing you that "this monument was erected by a disconsolate husband to the memory of his beloved wife." But that which excited greatest curiosity was a sycamore tree, which grew in the middle of the burying-ground.

It is necessary to inform the reader, that in Ireland many of the church-

* Certainly this wearing of red ribbons gives a very dreadful aspect to a funeral procession. It is not many years since it was witnessed in my native parish.

yards are exclusively appropriated to the interment of Roman Catholics, and, consequently, the corpse of no one who had been a Protestant would be permitted to pollute or desecrate them. This was one of them: but it appears that, by some means or other, the body of a Protestant *had* been interred in it—and hear the consequence! The next morning heaven marked its disapprobation of this awful visitation by a miracle; for, ere the sun rose from the east, a full-grown sycamore had shot up out of the heretical grave, and stands there to this day, a monument at once of the profanation and its consequence. Crowds were looking at this tree, feeling a kind of awe, mingled with wonder, at the deed which drew down such a visible and lasting mark of God's displeasure. On the tombstones near Kelly's grave, men and women were seated, smoking tobacco to their



very heart's content; for, with that profusion which characterises the Irish in everything, they had brought out large quantities of tobacco, whiskey, and bunches of pipes. On such occasions it is the custom for those who attend the wake or the funeral to bring a full pipe home with them; and it is expected that, as often as it is used, they will remember to say, "God be merciful to the soul of him that this pipe was over."

The crowd, however, now began to disperse; and the immediate friends of the deceased sent the priest, accompanied by Kelly's brother, to request that we would come in, as the last mark of respect to poor Denis's memory, and take a glass of wine and a cake.

"Come, Toby," said my brother, "we may as well go in, as it will gratify them; we need not make much delay, and we will still be at home in sufficient time for dinner."

"Certainly you will," said the Priest; "for you shall both come and dine with me to-day."

"With all my heart," said my brother; "I have no objection, for I know you give it good."

When we went in, the punch was already reeking from immense white jugs, that couldn't hold less than a gallon each.

"Now," said his Reverence, very properly, "you have had a decent and creditable funeral, and have managed every thing with great pro

priety ; let me request, therefore, that you will not get drunk, nor permit yourselves to enter into any disputes or quarrels ; but be moderate in what you take, and go home peaceably."

"Why, thin, your Reverence," replied the widow, "he's now in his grave, and, thank God, it's he that had the dacent funeral all out—ten good gallons did we put over you, astore, and it's yourself that liked the dacent thing, any how—but sure, Sir, it would shame him where he's lyin', if we disregarded him so far as to go home widout bringing in our friends, that didn't desart us in our throuble, an' thiratin' them for their kindness."

While Kelly's brother was filling out all their glasses, the priest, my brother, and I, were taking a little refreshment. When the glasses were filled, the deceased's brother raised his in his hand, and said,—

"Well, gintlemen," addressing us, "I hope you'll pardon me for not dhrinking your healths first ; but people, you know, can't break through an ould custom, at any rate—so I give poor Denis's health that's in his *warm* grave, and God be marcifal to his sowl."*

The priest now winked at me to give them their own way ; so we filled our glasses, and joined the rest in drinking "Poor Denis's health, that's now in his warm grave, and God be merciful to his soul."

When this was finished, they then drank ours, and thanked us for our kindness in attending the funeral. It was now past five o'clock ; and we left them just setting into a hard bout of drinking, and rode down to his Reverence's residence.

"I saw you smile," said he, on our way, "at the blundering toast of Mat Kelly ; but it would be labour in vain to attempt setting them right. What do they know about the distinctions of more refined life ? Besides, I maintain, that what they said was as well calculated to express their affection, as if they had drunk honest Denis's *memory*. It is, at least, unsophisticated. But did you hear," said he, "of the apparition that was seen last night, on the mountain road above Denis's ?"

"I did not *hear* of it," I replied, equivocating a little.

"Why," said he, "it is currently reported that the spirit of a murdered pedlar, which haunts the hollow of the road at Drumfurrar bridge, chased away the two servant men as they were bringing home the coffin, and that finding it a good fit, he got into it, and walked half a mile along the road, with the wooden surtout upon him ; and, finally, that to wind up the frolic, he left it on one end half-way between the bridge and Denis's house, after putting a crowd of the countrymen to flight. I suspect some droll knave has played them a trick. I assure you, that a deputation of them, who declared that they saw the coffin move along of itself, waited upon me this morning, to know whether they ought to have put him into the coffin, or gotten another."

"Well," said my brother, in reply to him, "after dinner we will probably throw some light upon that circumstance ; for I believe my brother here knows something about it."

"So, sir," said the priest, "I perceive you have been amusing yourself at their expense?"

* A fact.

I seldom spent a pleasanter evening than I did with Father Molloy (so he was called), who was, as my brother said, a shrewd, sensible man, possessed of convivial powers of the first order. He sang us several good songs; and, to do him justice, he had an excellent voice. He regretted very much the state of party and religious feeling, which he did every thing in his power to suppress.

"But," said he, "I have little co-operation in my efforts to communicate knowledge to my flock, and implant better feelings among them. You must know," he added, "that I am no great favourite with them. On being appointed to this parish by my bishop, I found that the young man who was curate to my predecessor, had formed a party against me, thinking, by that means, eventually to get the parish himself. Accordingly, on coming here, I found the chapel doors closed on me; so that a single individual among them would not recognise me as their proper pastor. By firmness and spirit, however, I at length succeeded, after a long struggle against the influence of the curate, in gaining admission to the altar; and, by a proper representation of his conduct to the bishop, I soon made my gentleman knock under. Although beginning to gain ground in the good opinion of the people, I am by no means yet a favourite. The curate and I scarcely speak; but I hope that in the course of time, both he and they will begin to find, that by kindness and a sincere love for their welfare on my part, good-will and affection will ultimately be established among us. At least, there shall be nothing left undone so far as I am concerned to effect it."

It was now near nine o'clock, and my brother was beginning to relate an anecdote concerning the clergyman who had preceded Father Molloy in the parish, when a messenger from Mr. Wilson, already alluded to, came up in breathless haste, requesting the priest, for God's sake, to go down into town instantly, as the Kellys and the Grimeses were engaged in a fresh quarrel.

"My God!" he exclaimed—"when will this work have an end? But, to tell you the truth, gentlemen, I apprehended it; and I fear that something still more fatal to the parties will yet be the consequence. Mr. D'Arcy, you must try what you can do with the Grimeses, and I will manage the Kellys."

We then proceeded to the town, which was but a very short distance from the Priest's house; and, on arriving, found a large crowd before the door of the house in which the Kellys had been drinking, engaged in hard conflict. The priest was on foot, and had brought his whip with him, it being an argument, in the hands of a Roman Catholic pastor, which tells so home that it is seldom gainsaid. Mr. Molloy and my brother now dashed in amongst them; and by remonstrance, abuse, blows, and entreaty, they with difficulty succeeded in terminating the fight. They were also assisted by Mr. Wilson and other persons, who dared not, until their appearance, run the risk of interfering between them. Wilson's servant, who had come for the priest, was still standing beside me, looking on; and, while my brother and Mr. Molloy were separating the parties, I asked him how the fray commenced.

"Why, Sir," said he, "it boin' market-day, the Grimeses chanced to

be in town, and this came to the ears of the Kellys, who were drinking in Cassidy's here, till they got tipsy; some of them then broke out, and began to go up and down the street, shouting for the face of a murdering Grimes. The Grimeses, Sir, happened at the time to be drinking with a parcel of their friends in Joe Sherlock's, and hearing the Kellys calling out for them, why, as the dhróp, Sir, was in on both sides, they were soon at it. Grimes has given one of the Kellys a great bating; but Tom Grogan, Kelly's cousin, a little before we came down, I'm tould, has knocked the seven senses out of him, with a pelt of a brick-bat in the stomach."

Soon after this, however, the quarrel was got under; and, in order to prevent any more bloodshed that night, my brother and I got the Kellys together, and brought them as far as our residence, on their way home. As they went along, they uttered awful vows, and determinations of the deepest revenge, swearing repeatedly, that they would shoot Grimes from behind a ditch, if they could not in any other manner have his blood. They seemed highly intoxicated; and several of them were cut and abused in a dreadful manner; even the women were in such a state of excitement and alarm, that grief for the deceased was, in many instances, forgotten. Several of both sexes were singing; some laughing with triumph at the punishment they had inflicted on the enemy; others of them, softened by what they had drunk, were weeping in tones of sorrow that might be heard a couple of miles off. Among the latter were many of the men, some of whom, as they staggered along, with their frieze big-coats hanging off one shoulder, clapped their hands, and roared like bulls, as if they intended, by the loudness of their grief then, to compensate for their silence when sober. It was also quite ludicrous to see the men kissing each other, sometimes in this maudlin sorrow, and at others when exalted into the very madness of mirth. Such as had been cut in the scuffle, on finding the blood trickle down their faces, would wipe it off - then look at it, and break out into a parenthetical volley of curses against the Grimeses; after which, they would resume their grief, hug each other in mutual sorrow, and clap their hands as before. In short, such a group could be seen no where but in Ireland.

When my brother and I had separated from them, I asked him what had become of Vengeance, and if he were still in the country.

"No," said he; "with all his courage and watchfulness, he found that his life was not safe; he, accordingly, sold off his property, and collecting all his ready cash, emigrated to America, where, I hear, he is doing well."

"God knows," I replied, "I shouldn't be surprised if one half of the population were to follow his example, for the state of society here, among the lower orders, is truly deplorable." "Ay, but you are to consider now," he replied, "that you have been looking at the worst of it. If you pass an unfavourable opinion upon our countrymen when in the public-house or the quarrel, you ought to remember what they are under their own roofs, and in all the relations of private life."

The "Party Fight," described in the foregoing sketch, is unhappily no fiction, and it is certain that there are thousands still alive who have good reason to remember it. Such a fight, or I should rather say battle

—for such in fact it was—did not take place in a state of civil society, if I can say so, within the last half century in this country. The preparations for it were secretly being made for two or three months previous to its occurrence, and however it came to light, it so happened that each party became cognizant of the designs of the other. This tremendous conflict, of which I was an eye-witness,—being then but about twelve years of age—took place in the town, or rather city, of Clogher, in my native county of Tyrone. The reader may form an opinion of the bitterness and ferocity with which it was fought on both sides when he is informed that the Orangemen on the one side, and the Ribbonmen on the other, had called in aid from the surrounding counties of Monaghan, Cavan, Fermanagh, and Derry; and, if I mistake not, also from Louth. In numbers, the belligerents could not have been less than from four to five thousand men. The fair day on which it occurred is known simply as “the Day of the great Fight.”





IN describing the habits, superstitions, and feelings of the Irish people, it would be impossible to overlook a place which occupies so prominent a position in their religious usages, as the celebrated Purgatory of St. Patrick, situated in a lake that lies among the bleak and desolate looking mountains of Donegal.

It may also be necessary to state to the reader, that the following sketch, though appearing in this place, was the first production from my pen which ever came before the public. The occasion of its being written was this:—I had been asked to breakfast by the late Rev. Cæsar Otway, sometime I think in the winter of 1829. About that time, or a little before, he had brought out his admirable work called, "Sketches in Ireland, descriptive of interesting portions of Donegal, Cork, and Kerry :—" Among the remarkable localities of Donegal, of course it was natural to suppose, that "*Lough Derg*," or the celebrated "*Purgatory of St. Patrick*," would not be omitted. Neither was it ; and nothing can exceed the accuracy and truthful vigour with which he describes its situation and appearance. In the course of conversation, however, I discovered that he had never been present during the season of making the Pilgrimages, and was consequently ignorant of the religious ceremonies which take place in it. In consequence, I gave him a pretty full and accurate account of them, and of the Station which I myself had made there. After

had concluded, he requested me to put what I had told him upon paper, adding, "I will dress it up and have it inserted in the next edition."

I accordingly went home, and on the fourth evening afterwards brought him the Sketch of the Lough Derg Pilgrim as it now appears, with the exception of some offensive passages which are expunged in this edition.—Such was my first introduction to literary life.

And here I cannot omit paying my sincere tribute of grateful recollection to a man from whom I have received so many acts of the warmest kindness. To me he was a true friend in every sense of the word. In my early trials his purse and his advice often supported, soothed, and improved me. In a literary point of view I am under the deepest obligations to his excellent judgment and good taste. Indeed were it not for him, I never could have struggled my way through the severe difficulties with which in my early career I was beset.

"Green be the turf above thee,
Friend of my early days;
None knew thee but to love thee,
Or named thee but to praise."

But to my theme, which will be better understood, as will my description of the wild rites performed on the shores of its most celebrated island, by the following extracts, taken from this able and most vivid describer of Irish scenery.

"The road from the village of Petigo leading towards Lough Derg, runs along a river tumbling over rocks; and then after proceeding for a time over a boggy valley, you ascend into a dreary and mountainous tract, extremely ugly in itself, but from which you have a fine view indeed of the greatest part of the lower lake of Lough Erne, with its many elevated islands, and all its hilly shores, green, wooded, and cultivated, with the interspersed houses of its gentry, and the comfortable cottages of its yeomanry—the finest yeomanry in Ireland: men living in comparative comfort, and having in their figures and bearing that elevation of character which a sense of loyalty and independence confers. I had at length, after travelling about three miles, arrived where the road was discontinued, and by the direction of my guide, ascended a mountain-path that brought me through a wretched village, and led to the top of a hill. Here my boy left me, and went to look for the man who was to ferry us to Purgatory, and on the ridge where I stood I had leisure to look around. To the south-west lay Lough Erne, with all its isles and cultivated shores; to the north-west, Lough Derg, and truly never did I mark such a contrast. Lough Derg under my feet—the lake, the shores, the mountains, the accompaniments of all sorts presented the very landscape of desolation; its waters expanding in their highland solitude, amidst a wide waste of moors, without one green spot to refresh the eye, without a house or tree—all mournful in the brown hue of its far-stretching bogs, and the grey uniformity of its rocks; the surrounding mountains even partook of the sombre character of the place; their forms without grandeur, their ranges continuous and without elevation. The lake itself was certainly as fine as rocky shores and numerous islands could make it: but it was encompassed with such dreariness; it was deformed so much

by its purgatorial island ; the associations connected with it were of such a degrading character, that really the whole prospect before me struck my mind with a sense of painfulness, and I said to myself, ' I am already in purgatory.' A person who had never seen the picture that was now under my eye, who had read of a place consecrated by the devotion of ages, towards which the tide of human superstition had flowed for twelve centuries, might imagine that St. Patrick's Purgatory, secluded in its sacred island, would have all the venerable and gothic accompaniments of olden time : and its ivied towers and belfried steeples, its carved windows, and cloistered arches, its long dark aisles and fretted vaults, would have risen out of the water, rivalling Iona or Lindisfarn ; but nothing of the sort was to be seen. The island, about half a mile from the shore, presented nothing but a collection of hideous slated houses and cabins, which give you an idea that they were rather erected for the purposes of toll-houses or police stations than any thing else.

" I was certainly in an interesting position. I looked southerly towards Lough Erne, with the Protestant city of Enniskillen rising amidst its waters, like the island queen of all the loyalty, and industry, and reasonable worship that have made her sons the admiration of past and present time ; and before me, to the north, Lough Derg, with its far-famed isle, reposing there as the monstrous birth of a dreary and degraded superstition, the enemy of mental cultivation, and destined to keep the human understanding in the same dark unproductive state as the moorland waste that lay outstretched around. I was soon joined by my guide and by two men carrying oars, with whom I descended from the ridge on which I was perched, towards the shores of the lake, where there was a sort of boat, or rather toll-house, at which the pilgrims paid a certain sum before they were permitted to embark for the island. In a few minutes we were afloat, ; and while sitting in the boat I had time to observe my ferrymen : one was a stupid countryman, who did not speak ; the other was an old man with a woollen night-cap under his hat, a brown snuff-coloured coat, a nose begrimed with snuff, a small grey eye enveloped amidst wrinkles that spread towards his temples in the form of birds' claws, and gave to his countenance a sort of leering cunning that was extremely disagreeable. I found he was the clerk of the island chapel ; that he was a sort of master of the ceremonies in purgatory, and guardian and keeper of it when the station time was over, and priests and pilgrims had deserted it. I could plainly perceive that he had *smoked* me out as a Protestant, that he was on his guard against me as a spy, and that his determination was to get as much and to give as little information as he could ; in fact, he seemed to have the desire to obtain the small sum he expected from me with as little exposure of his cause, and as little explanation of the practices of his *craft* as possible. The man informed me that the station time was over about a month, and he confirmed my guide's remark that the Pope's jubilee had much diminished the resort of pilgrims during the present season. He informed me also that the whole district around the lough, together with all its islands, belonged to Colonel L——, a relation of the Duke of Wellington ; and that this gentleman, as landlord, had leased the ferry of the island to certain per-

sons who had contracted to pay him £260 a year; and to make up this sum, and obtain a suitable income for themselves, the ferrymen charged each pilgrim five pence. Therefore, supposing that the contractors make cent. per cent. by their contract, which it may be supposed they do, the number of pilgrims to this island may be estimated at 13,000; and as my little guide afterwards told me, (although the cunning old clerk took care to avoid it,) that each pilgrim paid the priest from 1s. 8d. to 2s. 6d., therefore we may suppose that the profit to the prior of Lough Derg and his priests was no small sum.

"In a short time I arrived at the island, and as stepping out of the boat I planted my foot on the rocks of this scene of human absurdity, I felt ashamed for human nature, and looked on myself as one of the millions of fools that have, century after century, degraded their understandings by coming hither. The island I found to be of an oval shape. The buildings on it consisted of a slated house for the priests, two chapels, and a long range of cabins on the rocky surface of the island, which may contain about half an acre: there were also certain round walls about two feet high, enclosing broken stone and wooden crosses; these were called saints' beds, and around these circles, on the sharp and stony rocks, the pilgrims go on their naked knees. Altogether I may briefly sum up my view of this place, and say that it was filthy, dreary, and altogether detestable—it was a positive waste of time to visit it, and I hope I shall never behold it again."* * * * *

The following is extracted from Bishop Henry Jones's account, published in 1647.

"The island called St. Patrick's Purgatory is altogether rocky, and rather level; within the compass of the island, in the water towards the north-east, about two yards from the shore, stand certain rocks, the least of which, and next the shore, is the one St. Patrick knelt on for the third part of the night in prayer, as he did another third in his cell, which is called his bed, and another third in the cave or purgatory; in this stone there is a cleft or print, said to be made by St. Patrick's knees; the other stone is much greater and further off in the lake, and covered with water, called Lachavanny: this is esteemed of singular virtue; standing thereon healeth pilgrims' feet, bleeding as they are with cuts and bruises got in going barefoot round the blessed beds.

"The entrance into the island is narrow and rocky; these rocks they report to be the guts of a great serpent metamorphosed into stones. When Mr. Copinger, a gentleman drawn thither by the fame of the place, visited it, there was a church covered with shingles dedicated to St. Patrick, and it was thus furnished: at the east end was a high altar covered with linen, over which did hang the image of our Lady with our Saviour in her arms;

* FIRE AT LOUGH DERG.—On the 15th August, 1842, the station at this celebrated place was brought to a conclusion; but in the course of the night it was discovered that some of the houses were on fire, and four dwellings which, we believe, were recently erected, were altogether consumed. The people of the neighbouring country directed their efforts chiefly to the preservation of the prior's house, which adjoined those in flames, and by pouring a continued supply of water against its windows, succeeded in saving it. The night being calm, and the wind in a favourable direction, the injury sustained was less than must have existed under different circumstances. The houses burnt were occupied as lodgings for pilgrims when on station.

on the right did hang the picture of the three kings offering their presents to our Saviour; and on the left the picture of our Saviour on the cross; near the altar, and on the south side, did stand on the ground an old worm-eaten image of St. Patrick; and behind the altar was another of the same fabric, but still older in appearance, called St. Arioge; and on the right hand another image called St. Volusianus.

"Between the church and the cave there is a small rising ground, and on a heap of stones lay a little stone cross, part broken, part standing; and in the east of the church was another cross made of twigs interwoven: this is known by the name of St. Patrick's altar, on which lie three pieces of a bell, which they say St. Patrick used to carry in his hand. Here also was laid a certain knotty bone of some bigness, hollow in the midst like the nave of a wheel, and out of which issue, as it were, natural spokes: this was shown as a great rarity, being part of a great serpent's tail—one of those monsters the blessed Patrick expelled out of Ireland.

"Towards the narrowest part of the island were six circles—some call them saints' beds, or beds of penance. Pilgrims are continually praying and kneeling about these beds; and they are compassed around with sharp stones and difficult passages for the *accommodation* of such as go barefooted.

"In the farthest part northward of the island, are certain beds of stone cast together as memorials for some that are elsewhere buried; but who trust to the prayers and *merits* of those who daily resort to this Purgatory. Lastly, in this island are several Irish cabins covered with thatch, and another for shriving or confession; and there are separate places assigned for those who come from the four provinces of Ireland.

"In all, the pilgrims remain on the island nine days; they eat but once in the twenty-four hours, of oatmeal and water. They have liberty to refresh themselves with the water of the lake, which, as Roth says, 'is of such virtue, that though thou shouldst fill thyself with it, yet will it not offend; but is as if it flowed from some mineral.'

"The pilgrims at night lodge or lie on straw, without pillow or pallet, rolling themselves in their mantles, and wrapping their heads in their breeches; only on some one of the eight nights they must lie on one of the saints' beds, whichever they like."

I was at the time of performing this station, in the middle of my nineteenth year—of quick perception—warm imagination—a mind peculiarly romantic—a morbid turn for devotion, and a candidate for the priesthood, having been made slightly acquainted with Latin, and more slightly still with Greek. At this period, however, all my faculties merged like friendly streams into the large current of my devotion. Of religion I was completely ignorant, although I had sustained a very conspicuous part in the devotions of the family, and signalized myself frequently by taking the lead in a rosary. I had often out-prayed and out-fasted an old circulating pilgrim, who occasionally visited our family; a feat on which few would have ventured; and I even arrived to such a pitch of perfection at praying, that with the assistance of young and powerful lungs, I was fully able to distance him at any *English* prayer in

which we joined. But in Latin, I must allow, that owing to my imperfect knowledge of its pronunciation, and to some twitches of conscience I felt on adventuring to imitate him by overleaping this impediment, he was able to throw me back a considerable distance in his turn ; so that when we both started for a *De profundis*, I was always sure to come in second. Owing to all this I was considered a young man of promise, being, moreover, as my master often told my father, a youth of prodigious parts and great *cuteness*. Indeed, on this subject my master's veracity could not be questioned ; because when I first commenced Latin, I was often heard repeating the prescribed tasks in my sleep. Many of my relations had already, even upon the strength of my prospective priesthood, begun to claim relationship with our family, and before I was nineteen, I found myself godfather to a dozen godsons and as many god-daughters ; every one of whom I had with unusual condescension taken under my patronage ; and most of the boys were named after myself. Finding that I was thus responsible for so much, in the opinion of my friends, and having the aforesaid character of piety to sustain, I found it indispensable to make the pilgrimage. Not that I considered myself a sinner, or by any means bound to go from *that* motive, for although the opinion of my friends, as to my talents and sanctity, was exceedingly high, yet, I assure you, it cut but a very indifferent figure, when compared with my own on both these subjects.

I very well remember that the first sly attempt I ever made at a miracle was in reference to Lough Derg ; I tried it by way of preparation for my pilgrimage. I heard that there had been a boat lost there, about the year 1796, and that a certain priest who was in her as a passenger, had walked very calmly across the lake to the island, after the boat and the rest of the passengers in her had all gone to the bottom. Now, I had, from my childhood, a particular prejudice against sailing in a boat, although Dick Darcy, a satirical and heathenish old bachelor, who never went to Mass, used often to tell me, with a grin which I was never able rightly to understand, that I might have no prejudice against sailing, "because," Dick would say, "take my word for it you'll never die by drowning." At all events, I thought to myself, that should any such untoward accident occur to me, it would be no unpleasant circumstance to imitate the priest ; but that it would be infinitely more agreeable to make the first experiment in a marl-pit, on my father's farm, than on the lake. Accordingly, after three days' fasting and praying for the power of not sinking in the water, I slipped very quietly down to the pit, and after reconnoitring the premises, to be sure there was no looker on, I approached the brink.—At this moment my heart beat high with emotion, my soul was wrapt up to a most enthusiastic pitch of faith, and my whole spirit absorbed in feelings, where hope—doubt—gleams of uncertainty—visions of future eminence—twitches of fear—reflections on my expertness in swimming—on the success of the water-walking priest aforementioned—and on the depth of the pond—had all insisted on an equal share of attention. At the edge of the pit grew large water-lilies, with their leaves spread over the surface ; it is singular to reflect upon what slight and ridiculous circumstances the mind will seize, when wound up

in this manner to a pitch of superstitious absurdity. I am really ashamed, even whilst writing this, of the confidence I put for a moment in a treacherous water-lily, as its leaf lay spread so smoothly and broadly over the surface of the pond, as if to lure my foot to the experiment. However, after having stimulated myself by a fresh pater and ave, I advanced, my eyes turned up enthusiastically to heaven—my hands resolutely clenched—my teeth locked together—my nerves set—and my whole soul strong in confidence—I advanced, I say, and lest I might give myself time to cool from this divine glow, I made a tremendous stride, planting my right foot exactly in the middle of the treacherous water-lily leaf, and the next moment was up to the neck in water. Here was devotion cooled. Happily I was able to bottom the pool, or could swim very well if necessary; so I had not much difficulty in getting out. As soon as I found myself on the bank, I waited not to make reflections, but with a rueful face set off at full speed for my father's house, which was not far distant; the water all the while whizzing out of my clothes, by the rapidity of the motion, as it does from a water-spaniel after having been in that element. It is singular to think what a strong authority vanity has over the principles and passions in the weakest and strongest moments of both; I never was remarkable, at that open, ingenious period of my life, for secrecy; yet did I now take especial care not to invest either this attempt at the miraculous, or its concomitant failure, with any thing like narration. It was, however, an act of devotion that had a vile effect on my lungs, for it gave me a cough that was intolerable; and I never felt the infirmities of humanity more than in this ludicrous attempt to get beyond them; in which, by the way, I was nearer being successful than I had intended, though in a different sense. This happened a month before I started for Lough Derg.

It was about six o'clock of a delightful morning in the pleasant month of July, when I set out upon my pilgrimage, with a single change of linen in my pocket, and a pair of discarded shoes upon my bare feet; for, in compliance with the general rule, I wore no stockings. The sun looked down upon all nature with great good humour; everything smiled around me; and as I passed for a few miles across an upland country which stretched down from a chain of dark rugged mountains that lay westward, I could not help feeling, although the feeling was indeed checked,—that the scene was exhilarating. The rough upland was in several places diversified with green spots of cultivated land, with some wood, consisting of an old venerable plantation of mountain pine, that hung on the convex sweep of a large knoll away to my right,—with a broad sheet of lake that curled to the fresh arrowy breeze of morning, on which a variety of water-fowl were flapping their wings or skimming along, leaving a troubled track on the peaceful waters behind them: there were also deep intersections of precipitous or sloping glens, graced with hazel, holly, and every description of copse-wood. On other occasions I have drunk deeply of pleasure, when in the midst of this scenery, bearing about me the young, free, and bounding spirit, its first edge of enjoyment unblunted by the collision of base minds and stony hearts, against which experience jostles us in maturer life.

The dew hung shining upon the leaves, and fell in pattering showers

from the trees, as a bird, alarmed at my approach, would spring from the branch and leave it vibrating in the air behind her: the early challenge of the cock grouse, and the *quick-go-quick* of the quail, were cheerfully uttered on all sides. The rapid martins twittered with peculiar glee, or, in the light caprice of their mirth, placed themselves for a moment upon the edge of a scaur, or earthy precipice, in which their nests were built, and then shot off again to mingle with the careering and joyful flock that cut the air in every direction. Where is the heart which could not enjoy such a morning scene? Under any other circumstances it would have enchanted me; but here, in fact, that intensity of spirit which is necessary to the due contemplation of beautiful prospects, was transferred to a gloomier object. I was under the influence of a feeling quite new to me. It was not pleasure, nor was it pain, but a chilliness of soul which proceeded from the gloomy and severe task that I had undertaken—a task which, when I considered the danger and the advantages annexed to its performance, was sufficient to abstract me from every other object. It was really the first exercise of that jealous spirit of mistaken devotion, which keeps the soul in perpetual sickness, and invests the *innocent* enjoyments of life with a character of sin and severity. It was this gloomy feeling that could alone have strangled in their birth those sensations which the wisdom of God has given as a security in some degree against sin, by opening to the heart of man sources of pleasure, for which the soul is not compelled to barter away her innocence, as in those of a grosser nature. I may be wrong in analysing the sensation, but for the first time in my life I felt anxious and unhappy; yet, according to my own opinions, I should have been otherwise. I was startled at what I experienced, and began to consider it as a secret intimation that I had chosen a wrong time for my journey. I even felt as if it would not prosper—as if some accident or misfortune would befall me ere my return. The boat might sink, as in 1796: this was quite alarming. The miraculous experiment on the pond here occurred to me with full force, and came before my imagination in a new point of view. The drenching I got had a deep and fearful meaning. It was ominous—it was prophetic—and sent by a merciful Providence to deter me from attempting the pilgrimage at this peculiar time—perhaps on this particular day: to-morrow the spell might be broken, the danger past, and the difference of a single day could be nothing. Just at this moment an unlucky hare, starting from an adjoining thicket, scudded across my path, as if to fill up the measure of these ominous predictions. I paused, and my foot was on the very turn to the right-about, when instantly a thought struck me which produced a reaction in my imagination. Might not all this be the temptation of the devil suggested to prevent me from performing this blessed work? Might not the hare itself be some——? in short, the counter-current carried me with it. I had commenced my journey, and every one knows that when a man commences a journey it is *unlucky* to turn back. On I went, but still with a subdued and melancholy tone of feeling. If I met a cheerful countryman, his mirth found no kindred spirit in me: on the contrary, my taciturnity seemed to infect him; for, after several ineffectual attempts at conversation, he gradually became silent, or hummed a tune to himself, and, on

parting, bade me a short doubtful kind of good day, looking over his shoulder, as he departed, with a face of scrutiny and surprise.

After getting five or six miles across the country, I came out on one of those by-roads which run independently of all advantages of locality, "up hill and down dale," from one little obscure village to another. These roads are generally paved with round broad stones, laid curiously together in longitudinal rows like the buttons on a schoolboy's jacket. Owing to the infrequency of travellers on them, they are quite overgrown with grass, except in one stripe along the middle, which is kept naked by the hoofs of horses and the tread of foot-passengers. There is some tradition connected with these roads, or the manner of their formation, which I do not remember.

At last I came out upon the main road ; and you will be pleased to imagine to yourself the figure of a tall, gaunt, gawkish young man, dressed in a good suit of black cloth, with shirt and cravat like snow, striding solemnly along, without shoe or stocking ; for about this time I was twelve miles from home, and blisters had already risen upon my feet, in consequence of the dew having got into my shoes, which at the best were enough to cut up any man ; I had therefore to strip and carry my shoes—one in my pocket, and another stuffed in my hat ; being thus with great reluctance compelled to travel barefoot : yet I soon turned even this to account, when I reflected that it would enhance the merit of my pilgrimage, and that every fresh blister would bring down a fresh blessing. 'Tis true I was nettled to the soul, on perceiving the face of a labourer on the way-side, or of a traveller who met me, gradually expanding into a broad sarcastic grin, as such an unaccountable figure passed him. But these I soon began to suspect were Protestant grins ; for none but heretics would presume by any means to give me a sneer. The Catholics taking me for a priest, were sure to doff their hats to me ; or if they wore none, as is not unfrequent when at labour, they would catch their forelocks with their finger and thumb, and bob down their heads in the act of veneration. This attention of my brethren more than compensated for the mirth of all other sects ; in fact, their mistaking me for a priest began to give me a good opinion of myself, and perfectly reconciled me to the fatiguing severity of the journey.

I have had occasion to remark, while upon this pilgrimage, or rather long afterwards,—for I was but little versed *then* in the science of reflection—that it is impossible to calculate upon the capabilities of either body or mind, until they are drawn out by some occasion of peculiar interest, in which those of either or both are thrown upon their own energies and resources. In my opinion, the great secret or the directing principle of all enterprise rests in the motive of action ; for, whenever a suitable interest can be given to the principles of human conduct, the person bound by, and feeling that interest, will not only perform as much as could possibly be expected from his natural powers, but he will recruit his energies by drawing in all the adventitious aid which the various relations of that interest, as they extend to other objects, are capable of affording him. It was amazing, for instance, to observe the vigour and perseverance with which feeble, sickly old creatures, performed the necessary austerities of

this dreadful pilgrimage;—creatures, who if put to the same fatigue, on any other business, would at once sink under it; but the motive supplied energy, and the infirmities of nature borrowed new strength from the deep and ardent devotion of the spirit.

The first that I suspected to be fellow pilgrims were two women whom I overtook upon the way. They were dressed in grey cloaks, striped red-and-blue petticoats; drugget, or linseywoolsey gowns, that came within about three inches of their ancles. Each had a small white bag slung at her back, which contained the scanty provisions for the journey, and the oaten cakes, crisp and hard-baked, for the pilgrimage to the lake. The hoods of their cloaks fell down their backs, and each dame had a spotted cotton kerchief pinned round their *dowd* cap at the chin, whilst the remainder of it fell down the shoulders, over the cloaks. Each had also a staff in her hand, which she held in a manner peculiar to a travelling woman—that is, with her hand round the upper end of it, her right thumb extended across its head, and her arm, from the elbow down, parallel with the horizon. The form of each, owing to the want of that spinal strength and vigour which characterise the erect gait of man, was bent a little forward, and this, joined to the idea produced by the nature of their journey, gave to them something of an ardent and devoted character, such as the mind and eye would seek for in a pilgrim. I saw them at some distance before me, and knew by the staves and white bags behind them that they were bound for Lough Derg. I accordingly stretched out a little that I might overtake them; for in consequence of the absorbing nature of my own reflections, my journey had only been a solitary one, and I felt that society would relieve me. I was not a little surprised, however, on finding that as soon as I topped one height of the road, I was sure to find my two old ladies a competent distance before me in the hollow, (most of the northern roads are of this nature,) and that when I got to the bottom, I was as sure to perceive their heads topping the next hill, and then gradually sinking out of my sight. I was surprised at this, and perhaps a little nettled, that a fresh active young fellow should not have sufficient mettle readily to overtake two women. I *did* stretch out, therefore, with some vigour, yet it was not till after a chase of two miles or so, that I found myself abreast of them.

As soon as they noticed me they dropped a curtesy each, addressing me at the same time as a clergyman, and I returned their salutation with all due gravity. Upon my inquiring how far they had travelled that day, it appeared that they had actually performed a journey seven miles longer than mine: “We needn’t ax your Reverence if you’re for the Islan’?” said one of them. “I am,” I replied, not caring to undeceive her as to my Reverentiality.

The truth was, in the midst of all my sanctity I felt proud of the old woman’s mistake as to my priesthood, and really had not so much ready virtue about me, on the occasion, as was sufficient to undeceive her. I was even thankful to her for the inquiry, and thought, on a closer inspection, I perceived an uncommon portion of good sense and intelligence in her face. “My very excellent, worthy woman,” said I, “how is it that you are able to travel at such a rate, when one would suppose you

should be fatigued by this time, after so long a journey?" "Musha!" said she, "but your Reverence ought to know that."—I felt puzzled at this: "How should I know it?" said I. "I'm sure," she continued, "you couldn't expect a poor ould crathur o' sixty to travel at this rate, at all, at all; except for raisons, your Reverence:"—looking towards me quite confidently and knowingly. This was still more oracular, and I felt very odd under it; my character for devotion was at stake, and I feared that the old lady was drawing me into a kind of vicious circle. "Your Reverence knows, that for the likes o' me, that can hardly move to the market, of a Saturday, Lord help me! an' home agin, for to travel at this rate, would be unpossible, any how, except," she added, "for what I'm carryin', Sir, blessed be God for it!"—peering at me again with a more knowing and triumphant look. "Why, that's true," said I, thoughtfully; and then assuming a bit of the sacerdotal privilege, and suddenly raising my voice, although I was as innocent as the child unborn of her meaning,—"that's true; but now as you appear to be a sensible, pious woman, I hope you understand the nature of what you *are* carrying—and in a proper manner, too, for you know that's the chief point." "Why, Father dear, I do my best, avourneen; an' I ought of a sartinty to know it, bekase blessed Friar Hagan spent three days instructin' Mat and myself in it; an' more betoken, that Mat sent him a sack o' phaties, an' a bag of oats for his trouble, not forgettin' the goose he got from myself, the Micklemas aftther.—Arrah how long is that ago, Katty a-haygur?" said she, addressing her companion. "Ten years," said Katty. "Oh! it's more, I'm thinkin'; it's ten years since poor Dick, God rest his sowl, died, and this was full two years afore that: but no matter, agra, I'll let your Reverence hear the prayer, at any rate." She here repeated a beautiful Irish prayer to the Blessed Virgin, of which that beginning with "Hail holy Queen!" in the Roman Catholic prayer-books is a translation, or perhaps the original. While she was repeating the prayer, I observed her hand in her bosom, apparently extricating something, which, on being brought out, proved to be a scapular; she held it up, that I might see it: "Your Reverence," said she, "this is the ninth journey of the kind I made; but you don't wonder *now*, I bleeve, how stoutly I'm able to stump it."

"You really do stump it stoutly, as you say;" I replied.

"Ay," said she, "an' not a wan' o' me but's as weak as a cat, at home, scarce can put a hand to any thing; but then, your Reverence, my eldest daughter, Ellish, jist minds the house, an' lets the ould mother mind the prayers, as I'm not able to do a hand's turn, worth namin'."

"But you appear to be stout and healthy," I observed, "if a person may judge by your looks."

"Glory be to them that giv it to me then! *that* I am at the present time, *padra deelish*. But don't you know I'm always so durin' this journey; I've a wicket heart-burn that torments the very life out o' me, all the year round till this; and what 'ud your Reverence think, but it's sure to lave me, clear and clane, and a fortnight or so afore I come here; I never wanst feels a bit iv it, while I rouse and prepare myself for the Island, nor for a month after I come here agin, Glory be to God." She

then turned to her companion, and commenced, in a voice half audible—
 “Musha! Katty a-haygur, did ye iver lay your two livin’ eyes on so young a priest? a sweet and holy crathur he is, no doubt, and has goodness in his face, may the Lord bless him!”

“Musha!” said she, “surely your Reverence can’t be long afther bein’ ordained, I’m thinkin’?” “Well, that’s very strange,” said I, evading her, “so you tell me your heart-burn leaves you, and that you get stout every year about the time of your pilgrimage?” “An’ troth an’ I do!—but! what am I sayin’? *Indeed*, Sir, may be that’s more than I can say, either, your Reverence: but for sartin’ it is”—“Do you mean that you do, or that you do not?” I inquired. “Indeed, your Reverence, you jist hot it—the Lord bless you, and spare you to the parents that reared ye; an’ proud people may they be at having the likes of ’im, Katty avourneen”—turning abruptly to Katty, that she might disarm my interrogatories on this tender subject with a better grace—“proud people, as I said afore, the Lord may spare him to them!” We here topped a little hill, and saw the spire of a steeple, and the skirts of a country town, which a passenger told us was about three miles distant.

My feet by this time were absolutely in griskins, nor was I by any means prepared for a most unexpected proposal, which the spokeswoman, after some private conversation with the other, undertook to make. I could not imagine what the purport of the dialogue was; but I easily saw, that I myself was the subject of it, for I could perceive them glance at me occasionally, as if they felt a degree of hesitation in laying down the matter for my approval; at length she opened it with great adroitness:—
 “Musha, an’ to be sure he will, Katty dear an’ darlin’—and mightn’t you know he would—the refusin’ to do it isn’t in his face, as any body that has eyes to see may know—you ashamed!—and what for would ye be ashamed?—astore, it’s ’imself that’s not proud, or he wouldn’t tramp it, barefooted, along wud two ould crathurs like huz; him that has no sin to answer for—but I’ll spake to ’im myself, and ye’ll see it’s he that won’t refuse it. Why thin your Reverence, Katty an’ I war thinkin’, that as there’s only three of us, an’ the towns afore us, where we’ll rest a while, please God—for by that time the shower that’s away over there will be comin’ down;—that as there’s but three of us, would it be any harm if we sed a bit of a Rosary, and your Reverence to join us?”

This was, indeed, a most unexpected attack; but it was evident that I was set down by this curious woman as a paragon of piety; though indeed her object was rather to smooth the way in my mind, for what she intended should be a very excellent opinion of her own godliness.

I looked about me, and as far as my eye could reach, the road appeared solitary. I did, ’tis true, debate the matter with myself, *pro* and *con.*, for I felt the absurdity of my situation, and of this abrupt proposal, more than I was willing to suppose I did. Still, thought I, it is a serious thing to refuse praying with this poor woman, because she *is* poor—God is no respecter of persons—this too is a Rosary to the Blessed Virgin; besides, nothing can be too humbling for a person when once engaged in this holy station—“So pride, I trample you under my feet!” said I to myself, at a moment when the appearance of a respectable person on the road would

have routed all my humility. I complied, however, with a very condescending grace, and to it we went. The old women pulled out their beads, and I got my hat, which had one of my shoes in it, under my arm. They requested that I would open the Rosary, which I did: and thus we kept tossing the ball of prayer from one to another along the way, whilst I was bending and sinking on the hard gravel in perfect agony.

But we had not gone far, when the shower, which we did not suppose would have fallen until we should reach the town, began to descend with greater bounty than we were at all prepared for, or than I was, at least; for I had no outside coat: but indeed the morning was so beautiful, that rain was scarcely to be apprehended. With respect to the old lady, she appeared to be better acquainted with the necessary preparations for such a journey than I had been: for as soon as the shower became heavy, (and it fell very heavily) she whipped off her cloak, and before I could say a syllable to the contrary, had it pinned about me. She then drew out of a large four-cornered pocket of red cloth, that hung at her side, a hare's skin cap, which, in a twinkling was on her own cranium. But what was most singular; considering the heat of the weather, was the appearance of an excellent frieze jacket, such as porters and draymen usually wear, with two outside pockets on the sides, into one of which she drove her arm up to the elbow, and in the other hand carried her staff like a man—I thought she wore the cap, too, a little to the one side on her head. Indeed a more ludicrous appearance could scarcely be conceived than she now exhibited. I, on the other hand, cut an original figure, being six feet high, with a short grey cloak pinned tightly about me, my black cassimere small-clothes peeping below it—my long, yellow, polar legs, unincumbered with calves, quite naked; a good hat over the cloak—but no shoes on my feet, marching thus gravely upon my pilgrimage, with two such figures!

In this singular costume did we advance, the rain all the time falling in torrents. The town, however, was not far distant, and we arrived at a little thatched house, where "dry lodgin'" was offered above the door, both to "man and baste;" and never did an unfortunate group stand more in need of *dry* lodging, for we were wet to the skin. On entering the town, we met a carriage, in which were a gentleman and two ladies: I chanced to be walking a little before the woman, but could perceive by casting a glance into the carriage, that they were in convulsions with laughter; to which I have strong misgivings of having contributed in no ordinary degree. But I felt more indignant at the wit, forsooth, of the well-fed serving-man behind the coach, who should also have his joke upon us; for as we passed, he turned to my companion, whom he addressed as a male personage—"And why, you old villain, do you drive your cub to the 'island' pinioned in such a manner,—give him the use of his arms, you sinner!"—thus intimating that I was a booby son of her's in leading-strings. The old lady looked at him with a very peculiar expression of countenance; I thought she smiled, but never did a smile appear to me so pregnant with bitterness and cursing scorn. "Ay," said she, "there goes the well-fed heretic, that neither fasts nor prays—*his* God is his belly—they *have* the fat of the land for the present, your Reverence, but wait a bit. In the mane time, we had better get in here

a little, till this shower passes—you see the sun's beginnin' to brighten behind the rain, so it can't last long: and a bit of breakfast will do none of us any harm." We then entered the house aforesaid, which presented a miserable prospect for refreshment; but as I was in some measure identified with my fellow-travellers, I could not with a good grace give them up. I had not at the time the least experience of the world, was incapable of that discrimination which guides some people, as it were by instinct, in choosing their society, and had altogether but a poor notion of the more refined decorum of life. When we got in, the equivocal lady began to exercise some portion of authority. "Come," said she, "here's a clergyman, and you had better lose no time in gettin' his Reverence his breakfast;" then, said the civil creature to the mistress, in the same kind of half audible tone—"Avourneen, if you have anything comfortable, get it for him; he is generous, an' will pay you well for it; a blessed crathur he is too as ever brought good luck under your roof; Lord love you, if ye hard him discoursin' uz along the road, as if he was one of ourselves, so mild and sweet! I'm sure I'll always have a good opinion of myself for puttin' on the jacket this bout, at any rate, as I was able to spare his Reverence the cloak, a-haygur! the mild crathur!"

While my fellow-traveller was thus talking, I had time to observe that the woman of the house was a cleanly-looking creature, with something of a sickly appearance. An old grey-headed man sat in something between a chair and a stool, formed of one solid piece of ash, supported by three legs sloping outwards; the seat of it was quite smooth by long use, and a circular row of rungs, capped by a piece of semicircular wood, shaped to receive the reclining body of whoever might occupy it, rose from the seat in presumptuous imitation of an arm-chair. There were two other chairs besides this, but the remainder of the seats were all stools. The room was square, with a bed in each of the corners adjoining the fire, covered with blue drugget quilts, stoutly quilted; there was another room in which travellers slept. Opposite me on the wall was the appropriate picture of St. Patrick himself, with his crozier in hand, driving all kinds of venomous reptiles out of the kingdom. The Hermit of Killarney was on his right, and the Yarmouth Tragedy, or *the dolorious* history of Jemmy and Nancy, two unfortunate lovers, on his left. Such is the rigorous economy of a pilgrimage, and such the circumstances of the greater part of those who undertake it, that it is to houses of this description the generality of them resort. These "dry lodging" houses may not improperly be called Pilgrims' Inns, a great number of them being opened only during the continuance of the three months in which the stations are performed.

Breakfast was now got ready, but it was evident that my two companions had not been taken into account; for there was "an equipage" only for one. I inquired from my speaking partner if she and her fellow-traveller would not breakfast. The only reply I received was a sorrowful shake of the head, and "Och, no, plaise your Reverence, no!" in quite an exhausted cadence. On hearing this, the kind landlady gave them a look of uncommon pity, exclaiming at the same time, as if in communication with her own feelings, "Musha, God pity them, the poor crathurs; an'

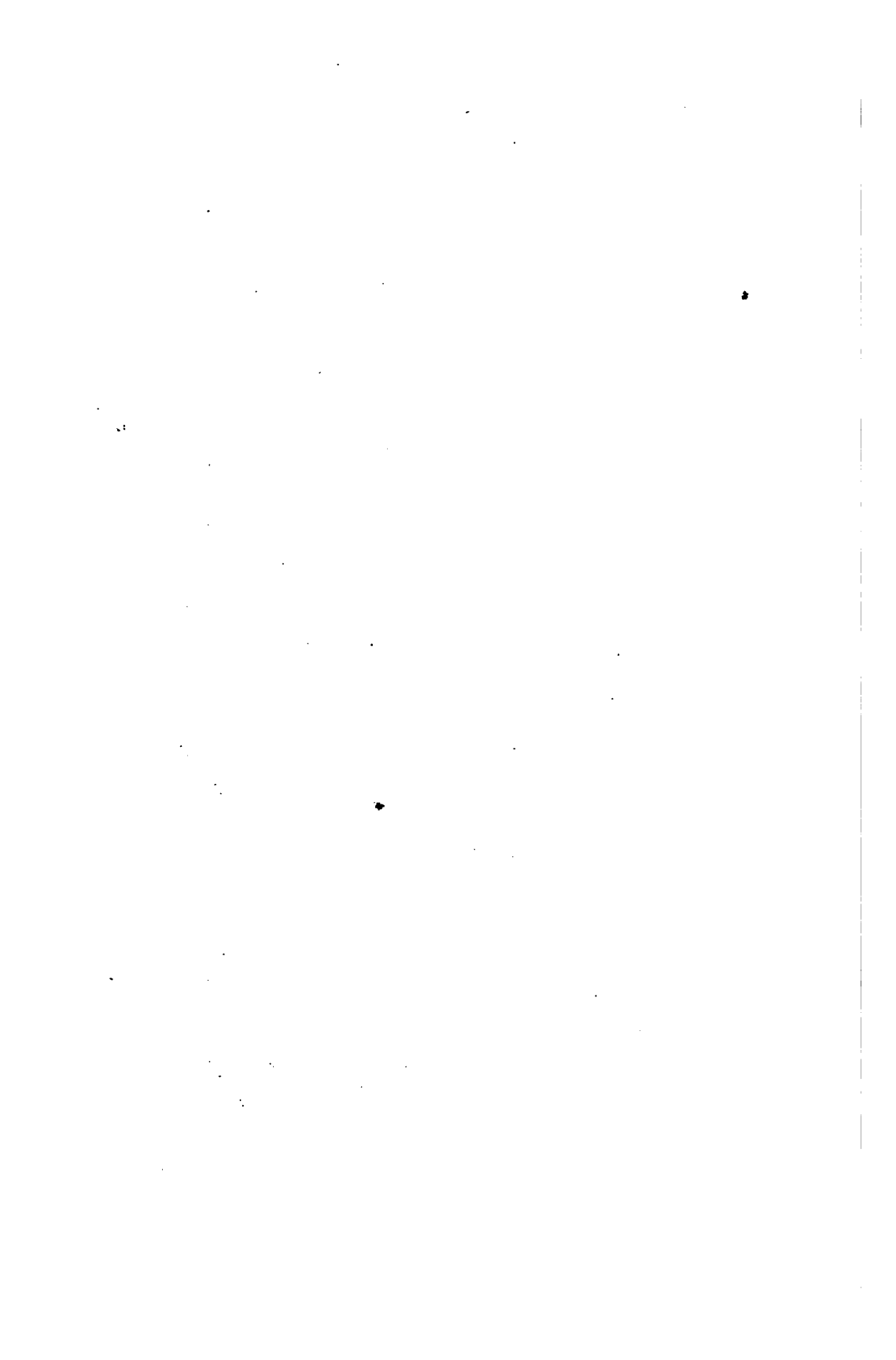
they surely can't but be both wake an hungry afther sich a journey, this blessed an' broilin' day—och ! och ! if I had it, or could afford it, an' they shouldn't want, any way—arrah, won't ye thry and ate a bit of something ?" addressing herself to them. "Och, then, no, a lanna, but I'd jist thank ye for a dbrink of cowl'd wather, if ye plase ; an' that may be the strengthenin' of us a bit." I saw at once that their own little stock of provisions, if they really had any, was too scanty to allow the simple creatures the indulgence of a regular meal ; still I thought they might, if they felt so very weak, have taken even a slight refreshment from their bags. However, I was bound in honour, and also in charity, to give them their breakfast, which I ordered accordingly for them both, it being, I considered, only fair that as we had prayed together we should eat together. Whilst we were at breakfast the landlady, with a piece of foresight for which I afterwards thanked her, warmed a pot of water, in which my feet were bathed ; she then took out of a large three-cornered pinoushion with tassels, which hung at her side, a darning-needle, and having threaded it, she drew a white woollen thread several times along a piece of soap, pressing it down with her thumb until it was quite soapy ; this she drew very tenderly through the blisters which were risen on my feet, cutting it at both ends, and leaving a part of it in the blister. It is decidedly the best remedy that ever was tried, for I can declare that during the remainder of my pilgrimage, not one of *these* blisters gave me the least pain.

When breakfast was over, and these kind attentions performed, we set out once more : and from this place, I remarked, as we advanced, that an odd traveller would fall in upon the way : so that before we had gone many miles farther, the fatigue of the journey was much lessened by the society of the pilgrims. These were now collected into little groups, of from three to a dozen, each, with the exception of myself and one or two others of a decenter cast, having the staff and bag. The chat and anecdotes were, upon the whole, very amusing ; but although there was a great variety of feature, character, and costume among so many, as must always be the case where people of different lives, habits, and pursuits, are brought together ; still I could perceive that there was a shade of strange ruminating abstraction apparent on all. I could observe the cheerful narrator relapse into a temporary gloom, or a fit of desultory reflection, as some train of thought would suddenly rise in his mind. I could sometimes perceive a shade of pain, perhaps of anguish, darken the countenance of another, as if a bitter recollection was awakened ; yet this often changed, by an unexpected transition, to a gleam of joy and satisfaction, as if a quick sense or hope of relief flashed across his heart.

When we came near Petigo, the field for observation was much enlarged. The road was then literally alive with pilgrims, and reminded me, as far as numbers were concerned, of the multitudes that flock to market on a fair-day. Petigo is a snug little town, three or four miles from the lake, where the pilgrims all sleep on the night before the commencement of their stations. When we were about five or six miles from it, the road presented a singular variety of grouping. There were men and women of all ages, from the sprouting devotee of twelve to the hoary,



Pilgrims entering the Town of Santiago.



tottering pilgrim of eighty, creeping along, bent over his staff, to perform this soul-saving work, and die.

Such is the reverence in which this celebrated place is held, that as we drew near it, I remarked the conversation to become slack; every face put on an appearance of solemnity and thoughtfulness, and no man was inclined to relish the conversation of his neighbour or to speak himself. The very women were silent. Even the lassitude of the journey was unfelt, and the unfledged pilgrim, as he looked up in his father's or mother's face, would catch the serious and severe expression he saw there, and trot silently on, forgetting that he was fatigued.

For my part, I felt the spirit of the scene strongly, yet, perhaps, not with such an *exclusive* interest as others. I had not only awe, terror, enthusiasm, pride, and devotion to manage, but suffered heavy annoyance from the inroad of a villanous curiosity which should thrust itself among the stately feelings of the occasion, and set all attempts to restrain it at defiance. It was a sad bar to my devotions, which, but for its intrusion, I might have conducted with more meritorious steadiness. How, for instance, was it possible for me to register the transgressions of my whole life, heading them under the "seven deadly sins," with such a prospect before me as the beautiful waters and shores of Lough Erne?

Despite of all the solemnity about me, my unmanageable eye would turn from the very blackest of the seven deadly offences, and the stoutest of the four cardinal virtues, to the beetling, abrupt, and precipitous rocks which hung over the lake as if ready to tumble into its waters. I broke away, too, from several "acts of contrition*" to conjecture whether the dark, shadowy inequalities which terminated the horizon, and penetrated, methought, into the very skies far beyond the lake, were mountains or clouds: a dark problem, which to this day I have not been able to solve. Nay, I was taken twice, despite of the most virtuous efforts to the contrary, from a *Salve Regina*†, to watch a little skiff, which shone with its snowy sail spread before the radiant evening sun, and glided over the waters, like an angel sent on some happy message. In fact, I found my heart on the point of corruption, by indulging in what I had set down in my vocabulary as the lust of the eye, and had some faint surmise that I was plunging into obduracy. I accordingly made a private mark with the nail of my thumb, on the "act of contrition" in my prayer-book, and another on the *Salve Regina*, that I might remember to confess for these devilish wanderings. But what all my personal piety could not effect, a lucky turn in the road accomplished, by bringing me from the view of the lake; and thus ended my temptations and my defeats on these points.

When we got into Petigo, we found the lodging-houses considerably crowded. I contrived, however, to establish myself as well as another, and in consequence of my black dress, and the garrulous industry of my epicene companion, who stuck close to me all along, was treated with more than common respect. And here I was deeply impressed with the remarkable contour of many visages, which I had now a better opportu-

* It should be observed here that several of the pilgrims, as they approach the vicinity of the Lough, are in the habit of praying privately along the way.

† A Latin hymn to the Virgin.

nity of examining than while on the road. There seemed every description of guilt, and every degree of religious feeling, mingled together in the same mass, and all more or less subdued by the same principle of abrupt and gloomy abstraction.

There was a little man, dressed in a turned black coat, and drab cassimere small-clothes, who struck me as a remarkable figure ; his back was long, his legs and thighs short, and he walked on the edge of his feet. He had a pale, sorrowful face, with bags hung under his eyes, drooping eyelids, no beard, no brows, and no chin ; for in the place of the two latter, there was a slight frown where the brows ought to have been, and a curve in the place of the chin, merely perceptible from the bottom of his underlip to his throat. He wore his own hair, which was a light bay, so that you could scarcely distinguish it from a wig. I was given to understand that he was a religious tailor under three blessed orders.

There was another round-shouldered man, with black twinkling eyes, plump face, rosy cheeks, and nose twisted at the top. In his character, humour appeared to be the predominant principle. He was evidently an original, and, I am sure, had the knack of turning the ludicrous side of every object towards him. His eye would roll about from one person to another while fingering his beads, with an expression of humour something like delight beaming from his fixed, steady countenance ; and when anything that would have been particularly worthy of a joke met his glance, I could perceive a tremulous twinkle of the eye intimating his inward enjoyment. I think still this jocular abstinence was to him the severest part of the pilgrimage. I asked him was he ever at the "Island" before ; he peered into my face with a look that infected me with risibility, without knowing why, shrugged up his shoulders, looked into the fire, and said "No," with a dry emphatic cough after it—as much as to say, you may apply my answer to the future as well as to the past. Religion, I thought, was giving him up, or sent him here as a last resource. He spoke to nobody.

A little behind the humourist sat a very tall, thin, important-looking personage, dressed in a shabby black coat ; there was a cast of severity and self-sufficiency in his face, which at once indicated him to be a man of office and authority, little accustomed to have his own will disputed. I was not wrong in my conjecture ; he was a classical schoolmaster, and was pompously occupied, when I first saw him, in reading through his spectacles, with his head raised aloft, the seven Penitential Psalms in Latin, out of the Key of Paradise, to a circle of women and children, along with two or three men in frieze coats, who listened with profound attention.

A little to the right of Syntax, were a man and woman—the man engaged in teaching the woman a Latin charm against the colic, to which it seems she was subject. Although they all, for the most part, who were in the large room about us, prayed aloud, yet by fastening the attention on any particular person, you could hear what he said. I therefore heard the words of this charm, and as my memory is not bad, I still remember them ; they ran thus :

Petrus sedebat super lapidem marmoream juxta cœdem Jerusalem et dolebat, Jesus veniebat et rogabat "Petre, quid dolas?" "Doleo vento ventre." "Surge, Petre, et sanus esto." Et quicumque hæc verba non scripta sed memoriter tradita recitat nunquam dolebit vento ventre.

These are the words literally, but I need not say, that had the poor woman sat there since, she would not have got them impressed on her memory.

There were also other countenances in which a man might almost read the histories of their owners. Methought I could perceive the lurking, unsubdued spirit of the battered rake, in the leer of his roving eye, while he performed, in the teeth of his flesh, blood, and principles, the delusive vow to which the shrinking spirit, at the approach of death, on the bed of sickness, clung, as to its salvation; for it was evident that superstition had only exacted from libertinism what fear and ignorance had promised her.

I could note the selfish, griping miser, betraying his own soul, and holding a false promise to his heart, as with lank jaw, keen eye, and brow knit with anxiety for the safety of his absent wealth, he joined some group, eager if possible to defraud them even of the benefit of their prayers, and attempting to practise that knavery upon heaven which had been so successful upon earth.

I could see the man of years, I thought, withering away under the disconsolation of an ill-spent life, old without peace, and grey without wisdom, flattering himself that he is religious because he prays, and making a merit of offering to God that which Satan had rejected; thinking, too, that he has withdrawn from sin, because the ability of committing it has left him, and taking credit for subduing his propensities, although they have only died in his nature.

I could mark, too, I fancied, the stiff, set features of the pharisee, affecting to instruct others, that he might show his own superiority, and descanting on the merits of works, that his hearers might know he performed them himself.

I could also observe the sly, demure overdoings of the hypocrite, and mark the deceitful lines of grave meditation running along that part of his countenance where in others the front of honesty lies open and expanded. I could trace him when he got beyond his depth, where the want of sincerity in religion betrayed his ignorance of its forms.

I could note the scowling, sharp-visaged bigot, wrapt up in the nice observance of trifles, correcting others, if the object of their supplications embraced anything within a whole hemisphere of heresy, and not so much happy because he thought himself in the way of salvation, as because he thought others *out* of it—a consideration which sent pleasure tingling to his fingers' ends.

But notwithstanding all this, I noticed, through the gloom of the place, many who were actuated by genuine, unaffected piety, from whom charity and kindness beamed forth through all the disadvantages around them. Such people, for the most part, prayed in silence and alone. Whenever I saw a man or woman anxious to turn away their faces, and separate themselves from the flocks of gregarious babblers, I seldom failed

to witness the outpouring of a contrite spirit. I have certainly seen, in several instances, the tear of heartfelt repentance bedew the sinner's cheek. I observed one peculiarly interesting female who struck me very much. In personal beauty she was very lovely—her form perfectly symmetrical, and she evidently belonged to rather a better order of society. Her dress was plain, though her garments were by no means common. She could scarcely be twenty, and yet her face told a tale of sorrow, of deep, wasting, desolating sorrow. As the prayers, hymns, and religious conversations which went on, were peculiar to the place, time, and occasion—it being near the hour of rest—she probably did not feel that reluctance in going to pray in presence of so many which she otherwise would have felt. She kept her eye on a certain female who had a remote dusky corner to pray in, and the moment she retired from it, this young creature went up and there knelt down. But what a contrast to the calm, unconscious, and insipid mummerly which went on at the moment through the whole room! Her prayer was short, and she had neither book nor beads; but the heavings of her bosom, and her suppressed sobs, sufficiently proclaimed her sincerity. Her petition, indeed, seemed to go to heaven from a broken heart. When it was finished, she remained a few moments on her knees, and dried her eyes with her handkerchief. As she rose up, I could mark the modest, timid glance, and the slight blush as she presented herself again amongst the company, where all were strangers. I thought she appeared, though in the midst of such a number, to be woefully and pitiably alone.

As for my own companion, she absolutely made the grand tour of all the praying knots on the premises, having taken a very tolerable bout with each. There were two qualities in which she shone pre-eminent—voice and distinctness; for she gave by far the loudest and most monotonous chant. Her visage also was remarkable, for her complexion resembled the dark, dingy red of a winter apple. She had a pair of very piercing black eyes, with which, while kneeling with her body thrown back upon her heels as if they were a cushion, she scrutinised, at her ease, every one in the room, rocking herself gently from side to side. The poor creature paid a marked attention to the interesting young woman I have just mentioned. At last, they dropped off one by one to bed, that they might be up early the next morning for the Lough, with the exception of some half-dozen, more long-winded than the rest, whose voices I could hear at their sixth rosary, in the rapid elevated tone peculiar to Catholic devotion, until I fell asleep.

The next morning, when I awoke, I joined with all haste the aggregate crowd that proceeded in masses towards the lake—or Purgatory—which lies amongst the hills that extend to the north-east of Petigo. While ascending the bleak, hideous mountain range, whose ridge commands a full view of this celebrated scene of superstition, the manner and appearance of the pilgrims were deeply interesting. Such groupings as pressed forward around me would have made fine studies either for him who wished to deplore or to ridicule the degradations and absurdities of human nature; indeed there was an intense interest in the scene. I look back at this moment with awe towards the tremulous and high-strained vibra-

tions of my mind, as it responded to the excitement. Reader, have you ever approached the Eternal City? have you ever, from the dreary solitudes of the Campagna, seen the dome of St. Peter's for the first time? and have the monuments of the greatest men and the mightiest deeds that ever the earth witnessed—have the names of the Cæsars, and the Catos, and the Scipios, excited a curiosity amounting to a sensation almost too intense to be borne? I think I can venture to measure the expansion of your mind, as it enlarged itself before the crowding visions of the past, as the dim grandeur of ages rose up and developed itself from amidst the shadows of time; and entranced amidst the magic of your own associations, you desired to stop—you were almost content to go no farther—your *own* Rome, you were in the midst of—Rome free—Rome triumphant—Rome classical. And perhaps it is well you awoke in good time from your shadowy dream, to escape from the unvaried desolation and the wasting *malaria* that brooded all around. Reader, I can fancy that such might have been your sensations when the domes and the spires of the world's capital first met your vision; and I can assure you, that while ascending the ridge that was to give me a view of Patrick's Purgatory, my sensations were as impressively, as powerfully excited. For I desire you to recollect, that the welfare of your immortal soul was not connected with your imaginings, your magnificent visions did not penetrate into the soul's doom. You were not submitted to the agency of a transcendental power. You were, in a word, a poet, but not a fanatic. What comparison, then, could there be between the exercise of your free, manly, cultivated understanding, and my feelings on this occasion, with my thick-coming visions of immortality, that almost lifted me from the mountain-path I was ascending, and brought me, as it were, into contact with the invisible world? I repeat it, then, that such were my feelings, when all the faculties which exist in the mind were aroused and concentrated upon one object. In such a case, the pilgrim stands, as it were, between life and death; and as it was superstition that placed him there, she certainly conjures up to his heated fancy those dark, fleeting, and indistinct images which are best adapted to that gloom which she has already cast over his mind. Although there could not be less than two hundred people, young and old, boys and girls, men and women, the hale and the sickly, the blind and the lame, all climbing to gain the top with as little delay as possible, yet was there scarcely a sound, certainly not a word, to be heard among them. For my part, I plainly heard the palpitations of my heart, both loud and quick. Had I been told that the veil of eternity was about to be raised before me at that moment, I could scarcely have felt more intensely. Several females were obliged to rest for some time, in order to gain both physical and moral strength—one fainted; and several old men were obliged to sit down. All were praying, every crucifix was out, every bead in requisition; and nothing broke a silence so solemn but a low, monotonous murmur of deep devotion.

As soon as we ascended the hill, the whole scene was instantly before us: a large lake, surrounded by an amphitheatre of mountains, bleak, uncomfortable, and desolate. In the lake itself, about half a mile from

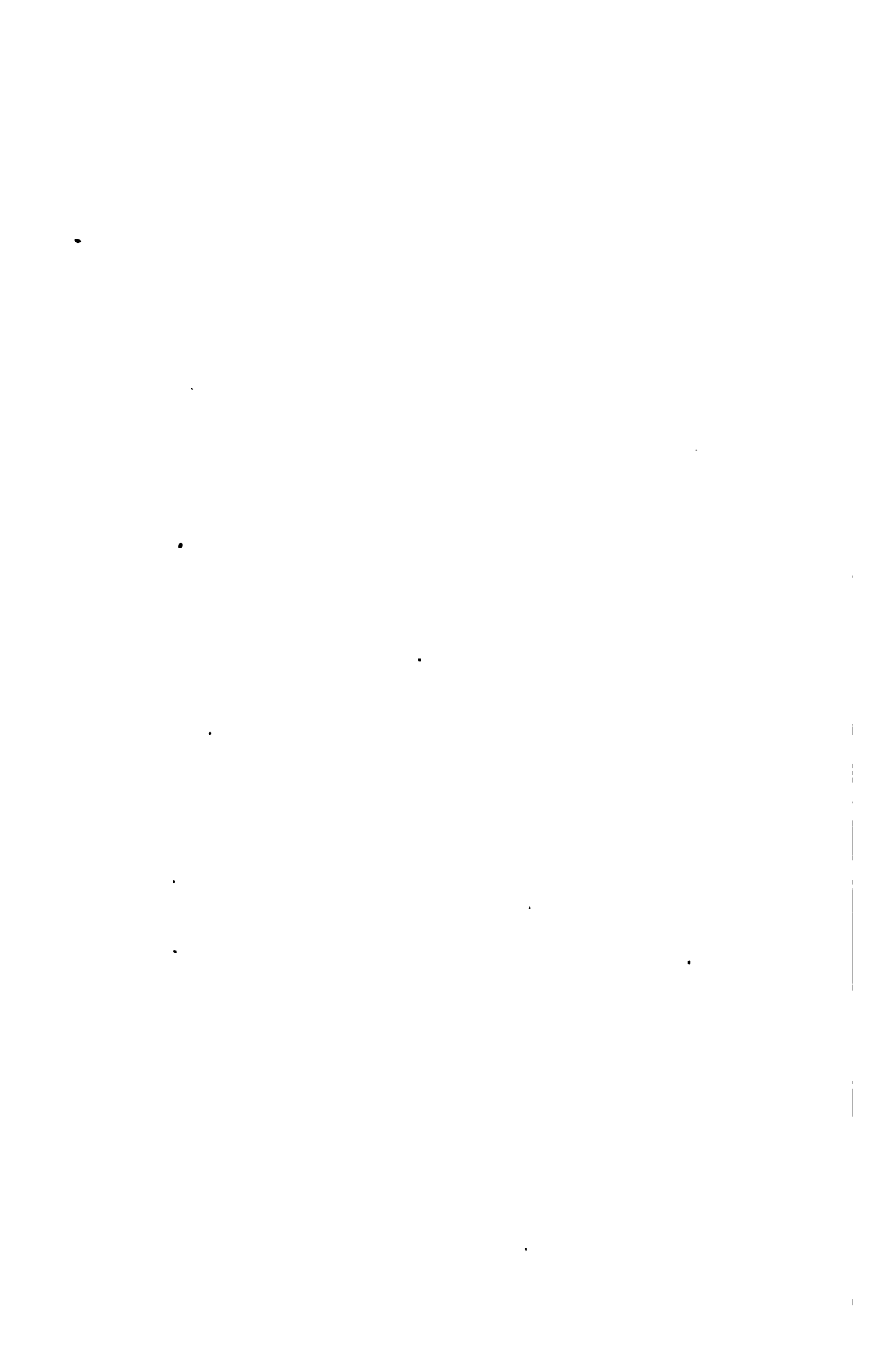
the edge next us, was to be seen the "Island," with two or three slated houses on it, naked and unplastered, as desolate-looking almost as the mountains. A little range of exceeding low hovels, which a dwarf could scarcely enter without stooping, appeared to the left; and the eye could rest on nothing more, except a living mass of human beings crawling slowly about. The first thing the pilgrim does when he gets a sight of the lake, is to prostrate himself, kiss the earth, and then on his knees offer up three *Paters* and *Aves*, and a *Creed* for the favour of being permitted to see this blessed place. When this is over, he descends to the lake, and after paying tenpence to the ferryman, is rowed over to the Purgatory.

When the whole view was presented to me, I stood for some time to contemplate it; and I cannot better illustrate the reaction which took place in my mind, than by saying that it resembles that awkward inversion which a man's proper body experiences when, on going to pull something from which he expects a marvellous resistance, it comes with him at a touch, and the natural consequence is, that he finds his head down and his heels up. That which dashed the whole scene from the dark elevation in which the romance of devotion had placed it was the appearance of slated houses, and of the smoke that curled from the hovels and the prior's residence. This at once brought me back to humanity; and the idea of roasting meat, boiling pots, and dressing dinners, dispossessed every fine and fearful image which had floated through my imagination for the last twelve hours. In fact, allowing for the difference of situation, it nearly resembled John's Well, or James's Fair, when beheld at a distance, turning the slated houses into inns, and the hovels into tents. A certain idea, slight, untraceable, and involuntary, went over my brain on that occasion, which, though it did not *then* cost me a single effort of reflection, I think was revived and developed at a future period of my life, and became, perhaps to a certain extent, the means of opening a wider range of thought to my mind, and of giving a new tone to my existence. Still, however, nothing except my idea of its external appearance disappointed me; I accordingly descended with the rest, and in a short time found myself among the living mass upon the island.

The first thing I did was to hand over my three cakes of oaten bread which I had got made in Petigo, tied up in a handkerchief, as well as my hat and second shirt, to the care of the owner of one of the huts: having first, by the way, undergone a second prostration on touching the island, and greeted it with fifteen holy kisses, and another string of prayers. I then, according to the regulations, should commence the *stations*, lacerated as my feet were after so long a journey; so that I had not a moment to rest. Think, therefore, what I must have suffered, on surrounding a large chapel, in the direction of from east to west, over a pavement of stone spikes, every one of them making its way along my nerves and muscles to my unfortunate brain. I was absolutely stupid and dizzy with the pain, the praying, the jostling, the elbowing, the scrambling and the uncomfortable penitential murmurs of the whole crowd. I knew not what I was about, but went through the forms in the same mechanical



The Pilgrims entering the Boat



spirit which pervaded all present. As for that solemn, humble, and heartfelt sense of God's presence, which Christian prayer demands, its existence in the mind would not only be a moral but a physical impossibility in Lough Dearg. I verily think that if mortification of the body, without conversion of the life or heart—if penance and not repentance *could* save the soul, no wretch who performed a pilgrimage here could with a good grace be damned. Out of hell the place is matchless, and if there *be* a purgatory in the other world, it may very well be said there is a fair rehearsal of it in the county of Donegal in Ireland!

When I commenced my station, I started from what is called the "Beds," and God help St. Patrick if he lay upon them: they are sharp stones placed circularly in the earth, with the spike ends of them up, one circle within another; and the manner in which the pilgrim gets as far as the innermost, resembles precisely that in which school-boys enter the "Walls of Troy" upon their slates. I moved away from these upon the sharp stones with which the whole island is surfaced, keeping the chapel, or "Prison," as it is called, upon my right; then turning, I came round again, with a *circumbendibus*, to the spot from which I set out. During this circuit, as well as I can remember, I *repeated* fifty-five *paters* and *aves*, and five creeds, or five decades; and be it known, that the fifty prayers were *offered up* to the Virgin Mary, and the odd five to God! I then commenced getting round the external beds, during which I *repeated*, I think, fifteen *paters* and *aves* more; and as the beds decreased in circumference, the prayers decreased in length, until a short circuit and three *paters* and *aves* finished the last and innermost of these blessed couches. I really forget how many times each day the prison and these beds are to be surrounded, and how many hundred prayers are to be *repeated* during the circuit, though each circuit is in fact making the grand tour of the island; but I never shall forget that I was the best part of a July day at it, when the soles of my feet were flayed, and the stones hot enough to broil a beef-steak! When the first day's station was over, is it necessary to say that a little rest would have been agreeable? But no, this would not suit the policy of the place: here it may be truly said that there is no rest for the wicked. The only luxury allowed me was the privilege of feasting upon one of my cakes (having not tasted food that blessed day until then); upon one of my cakes, I say, and a copious supply of the water of the lake, which, to render the repast more agreeable, was made lukewarm! This was to keep my spirits up after the delicate day's labour I had gone through, and to cheer me against the pleasant prospect of a hard night's praying without sleep, which lay in the back ground! But when I saw every one at this refreshing meal with a good, thick, substantial *bannock*, and then looked at the immateriality of my own, I could not help reverting to the woman who made them for me, with a degree of vivacity not altogether in unison with the charity of a Christian. The knavish creature defrauded me of one half of the oatmeal, although I had purchased it myself in Petigo for the occasion; being determined that as I was only to get two meals in the three days, they should be such as a person could fast upon. Never was there a man more bitterly disappointed; for they were not thicker than crown-

pieces, and I searched for them in my mouth to no purpose—the only thing like substance I could feel there was the warm water. At last, night came; but here to describe the horrors of what I suffered I hold myself utterly inadequate. I was wedged in a shake-down bed with seven others, one of whom was a Scotch Papist—another a man with a shrunk leg, who wore a crutch—all afflicted with that disease which northern men that feed on oatmeal are liable to; and then the swarms that fell upon my poor young skin, and probed, and stung, and fed on me! it was pressure and persecution almost insupportable, and yet such was my fatigue that sleep even here began to weigh down my eyelids.

I was just on the point of enjoying a little rest, when a man ringing a large hand-bell, came round, crying out in a low, supernatural growl, which could be heard double the distance or the loudest shout—"Waken up, waken up, and come to prison!" The words were no sooner out of his mouth, than there was a sudden start, and a general scramble in the dark for our respective garments. When we got dressed, we proceeded to the waters of the lake, in which we washed our face and hands, repeating prayers during the ablution. This to me was the most impressive and agreeable part of the whole station. The night while we were in bed, or rather in torture, had become quite stormy, and the waves of the lake beat against the shore with the violence of an agitated sea. There was just sufficient moon to make the "darkness visible," and to show the black clouds drifting with rapid confusion, in broken masses, over our heads. This, joined to the tossing of the billows against the shore—the dark silent groups that came, like shadows, stooping for a moment over the surface of the waters, and retreating again in a manner which the severity of the night rendered necessarily quick, raising thereby in the mind the idea of gliding spirits—then the pre-conceived desolation of the surrounding scenery—the indistinct shadowy chain of dreary mountains which, faintly relieved by the lurid sky, hemmed in the lake—the silence of the forms, contrasted with the tumult of the elements about us—the loneliness of the place—its isolation and remoteness from the habitations of men—all this put together, joined to the feeling of deep devotion in which I was wrapped, had really a sublime effect upon me. Upon the generality of those who were there, blind to the natural beauty and effect of the hour and the place, and viewing it only through the medium of superstitious awe, it was indeed calculated to produce the notion of something not belonging to the circumstances and reality of human life.

From this scene we passed to one, which, though not characterized by its dark awful beauty, was scarcely inferior to it in effect. It was called the "Prison," and it is necessary to observe here, that every pilgrim must pass twenty-four hours in this place, kneeling, without food or sleep, although one meal of bread and warm water, and whatever sleep he could get in Petigo with seven in a bed, were his allowance of food and sleep during the twenty-four hours previous. I must here beg the good reader's attention for a moment, with reference to our penance in the "Prison." Let us consider now the nature of this pilgrimage: it must be performed on foot, no matter what the distance of residence (allowing for voyages)—the condition of life—the age or the sex of the pilgrim may be. Indivi-

duals, from France, from America, England, and Scotland visit it—as voluntary devotees, or to perform an act of penance for some great crime, or perhaps to atone for a bad life in general. It is performed, too, in the dead heat of summer, when labour is slack, and the lower orders have sufficient leisure to undertake it; and, I may add, when travelling on foot is most fatiguing: they arrive, therefore, without a single exception, blown and jaded almost to death. The first thing they do, notwithstanding this, is to commence the fresh rigours of the station, which occupies them several hours. This consists in what I have already described, viz. the pleasant promenade upon the stony spikes around the prison and the “beds;” that over, they take their first and only meal for the day; after which, as in my own case just related, they must huddle themselves in clusters, on what is barefacedly called a bed, but which is nothing more nor less than a beggarman’s shake-down, where the smell, the heat, the filth, and above all, the vermin, are intolerable to the very farthest stretch of the superlative degree. As soon as their eyes begin to close here, they are roused by the bellman, and summoned at the hour of twelve—first washing themselves as aforesaid, in the lake, and then adjourning to the prison, which I am about to describe. There is not on earth, with the exception of pagan rites,—and it is melancholy to be compelled to compare any institution of the Christian religion with a Juggernaut,—there is not on earth, I say, a regulation of a religious nature, more barbarous and inhuman than this. It has destroyed thousands since its establishment—has left children without parents, and parents childless. It has made wives widows, and torn from the disconsolate husband the mother of his children; and is itself the monster which St. Patrick is said to have destroyed in the place—a monster, which is a complete and significant allegory of this great and destructive superstition. But what is even worse than death, by stretching the powers of human sufferance until the mind cracks under them, it is said sometimes to return these pitiable creatures maniacs—exulting in the laugh of madness, or sunk for ever in the incurable apathy of religious melancholy. I mention this now, to exhibit the purpose for which these calamities are turned to account, and the dishonesty which is exercised over these poor, unsuspecting people, in consequence of their occurrence. The pilgrims, being thus aroused at midnight, are sent to prison; and what think you is the impression under which they enter it? one indeed, which, when we consider their bodily weakness and mental excitement, must do its work with success. It is this: that as soon as they enter the prison, a *supernatural* tendency to sleep will come over them, which, they say, is peculiar to the place; that this is an emblem of the influence of sin over the soul, and a type of their future fate; that if they resist this they will be saved; but that if they yield to it, they will not only be damned in the next world, but will go mad, or incur some *immediate and dreadful* calamity in this. Is it any wonder that a weak mind and exhausted body, wrought upon by these bugbears, should induce *upon its own*, by its own terrors, the malady of derangement? We know that *nothing acts so strongly* and so fatally upon reason, as an *imaginary sin* and by religious terrors: and I regret to say, that I had
it an opportunity of witnessing a fatal instance of it.

After having washed ourselves in the dark waters of the lake, we entered this famous "prison," which is only a naked, unplastered chapel, with an altar against one of the side-walls, and two galleries. On entering this place, a scene presented itself altogether unparalleled on the earth, and in every point of view capable to sustain the feelings raised in the mind by the midnight scenery of the lake as seen during the ablutions. The prison was full, but not crowded; for had it been crowded, we would have been happy. It was, however, just sufficiently filled to give every individual the pleasure of sustaining himself, without having it in his power to recline for a moment in an attitude of rest, or to change that most insupportable of all bodily suffering, uniformity of position. There we knelt upon a hard ground floor, and commenced praying; and again I must advert to the policy which prevails in this island. During the period of imprisonment, there are no prescribed prayers nor ceremonies whatever to be performed, and this is the more strange, as every other stage of the station has its proper devotions. But these are suspended here, lest the attention of the prisoners might be fixed on any particular object, and the supernatural character of drowsiness imputed to the place be thus doubted—they are, therefore, turned in without anything to excite them to attention, or to resist the propensity to sleep occasioned by their fatigue and want of rest. Having thus nothing to do, nothing to sustain, nothing to stimulate them, it is very natural that they should, even if unexhausted by previous lassitude, be inclined to sleep; but everything that can weigh them down is laid upon them in this heavy and oppressive superstition, that the strong delusion may be kept up.

On entering the prison, I was struck with the dim religious twilight of the place. Two candles gleamed faintly from the altar, and there was something I thought of a deadly light about them, as they burned feebly and stilly against the darkness which hung over the other part of the building. Two priests, facing the congregation, stood upon the altar in silence, with pale spectral visages, their eyes catching an unearthly glare from the sepulchral light of the slender tapers. But that which was strangest of all, and, as I said before, without parallel in this world, was the impression and effect produced by the deep, drowsy, hollow, hoarse, guttural, ceaseless, and monotonous *hum*, which proceeded from about four hundred individuals, half asleep and at prayer; for their cadences were blended and slurred into each other, as they repeated, in an awe-struck and earnest undertone, the prayers in which they were engaged. It was certainly the strangest sound I ever heard, and resembled a thousand subterraneous groans, uttered in a kind of low, deep, unvaried chant. Nothing could produce a sense of gloomy alarm in a weak superstitious mind equal to this; and it derived much of its wild and singular character, as well as of its lethargic influence, from its continuity; for it still—still rung lowly and supernaturally on my ear. Perhaps the deep, wavy prolongation of the bass of a large cathedral bell, or that low, continuous sound, which is distinct from its higher and louder intonations, would give a faint notion of it, yet only a faint one; for the body of hoarse monotony here was immense. Indeed, such a noise had something so powerfully

telling, that human nature, even excited by the terrible suggestions of superstitious fear, was scarcely able to withstand it.

Now the poor pilgrims forget, that this strong disposition to sleep arises from the weariness produced by their long journeys—by the exhausting penance of the station, performed without giving them time to rest—by the other still more natural consequence of not giving them time to sleep—by the drowsy darkness of the chapel—and by the heaviness caught from the low peculiar murmur of the pilgrims, which would of itself overcome the lightest spirit. I was here but a very short time when I began to doze, and just as my chin was sinking placidly on my breast, and the words of an *Ave Maria* dying upon my lips, I felt the charm all at once broken by a well-meant rap upon the occiput, conferred through the instrumentality of a little angry-looking squat urchin of sixty years, and a remarkably good black-thorn cudgel, with which he was engaged in thwacking the heads of such sinners as, not having the dread of insanity and the regulations of the place before their eyes, were inclined to sleep. I declare the knock I received told to such purpose on my head, that nothing occurred during the pilgrimage that vexed me so much.

After all, I really slept the better half of the night; yet so indescribably powerful was the apprehension of derangement, that my hypocritical tongue wagged aloud at the prayers, during these furtive naps. Nay, I not only slept but dreamed. I experienced also that singular state of being, in which, while the senses are accessible to the influence of surrounding objects, the process of thought is suspended, the man seems to enjoy an inverted existence, in which the soul sleeps, and the body remains awake and susceptible of external impressions. I once thought I was washing myself in the lake, and that the dashing noise of its waters rang in my ears: I also fancied myself at home in conversation with my friends; yet, in neither case, did I altogether forget where I was. Still in struggling to bring my mind back, so paramount was the dread of awaking deranged should I fall asleep, that these occasional visions—associating themselves with this terror—and this again broken in upon by the hoarse murmurs about me, throwing their dark shade on every object that passed my imagination, the force of reason being too vague at the moment; these occasional visions, I say, and this jumbling together of broken images and disjointed thoughts, had such an effect upon me, that I imagined several times that the awful penalty was exacted, and that my reason was gone for ever. I frequently started, and on seeing two dim lights upon the altar, and on hearing the ceaseless and eternal murmurs going on—going on—around me, without being immediately able to ascribe them to their proper cause, I set myself down as a lost man; for on that terror I was provokingly clear during the whole night. I more than once gave an involuntary groan or shriek, on finding myself in this singular state; so did many others, and these groans and shrieks were wildly and fearfully contrasted with the never-ending hum, which, like the ceaseless noise of a distant waterfall, went on during the night. The perspiration occasioned by this inconceivable distress, by the heat of the place, and by the unchangeable-

ness of my position, flowed profusely from every pore. About two o'clock in the morning an unhappy young man, either in a state of lethargic indifference, or under the influence of these sudden paroxysms, threw himself, or fell from one of the galleries, and was so shattered by the fall, that he died next day at twelve o'clock,—and, what was not much to the credit of the clergyman on the island,—without the benefit of the clergy; for I saw a priest with his stole and box of chrism finishing off his extreme unction when he was quite dead. This is frequently done in the Church of Rome, under a hope that life may not be utterly extinct, and that consequently the final separation of the soul and body may not have taken place.

In this prison, during the night, several persons go about with rods and staves, rapping those on the head whom they see heavy; snuff-boxes also go round very freely, elbows are jogged, chins chucked, and ears twitched, for the purpose of keeping each other awake. The rods and staves are frequently changed from hand to hand, and I thought it would be a lucky job if I could get one for a little, to enable me to change my position. I accordingly asked a man who had been a long time banging in this manner, if he would allow me to take his place for some time, and he was civil enough to do so. I therefore set out on my travels through the prison, rapping about me at a great rate, and with remarkable effect; for, whatever was the cause of it, I perceived that not a soul seemed the least inclined to doze after a visit from me; on the contrary, I observed several to scratch their heads, giving me at the same time significant looks of very sincere thankfulness.

But what I am convinced was the most meritorious act of my whole pilgrimage, as it was certainly the most zealously performed, was a remembrance I gave the squat fellow, who visited me in the early part of the night. He was engaged, tooth and nail, with another man, at a *De profundis*, and although not asleep at the time, yet on the principle that prevention is better than cure, I thought it more prudent to let him have his rap before the occasion for it might come on: he accordingly got full payment, at compound interest, for the villanous knock he had *lent* me before.

This employment stirred my blood a little, and I got much lighter. I could now pay some attention to the scene about me, and the first object that engaged it was a fellow with a hare-lip, who had completely taken the lead at prayer. The organs of speech seemed to have been transferred from his mouth to his nose, and, although Irish was his vernacular language, either some fool or knave had taught him to *say his prayers* in English: and you may take this as an observation founded on fact, that the language which a Roman Catholic of the lower class does *not* understand, is the one in which he is disposed to pray. As for him he had lots of English prayers, though he was totally ignorant of that language. The twang from the nose, the loud and rapid tone in which he spoke, and the *malaproprian* happiness with which he travestied every prayer he uttered, would have compelled any man to smile. The priests laughed outright before the whole congregation, particularly one of them, whom I well knew; the other turned his face towards the altar, and leaning over

a silver pix, in which, according to their own tenets, the Redeemer of the world must have been at that moment, as it contained the consecrated wafers, gave full vent to his risibility. Now it is remarkable that no one present attached the slightest impropriety to this—I for one did not; although it certainly occurred to me with full force at a subsequent period.

When morning came, the blessed light of the sun broke the leaden charm of the prison, and infused into us a wonderful portion of fresh vigour. This day being the second from our arrival, we had our second station to perform, and consequently all the sharp spikes to re-traverse. We were not permitted at all to taste food during these twenty-four hours, so that our weakness was really very great. I beg leave, however, to return my special acknowledgments for the truly hospitable allowance of *wine* with which I, in common with every other pilgrim, was treated. This wine is made by filling a large pot with the lake water, and making it lukewarm. It is then handed round in jugs and wooden noggins—to their credit be it recorded—in the greatest possible abundance. On this alone I breakfasted, dined, and supped, during the second or prison day of my pilgrimage.

At twelve o'clock that night we left prison, and made room for another squadron, who gave us their kennels. Such a luxury was sleep to me, however, that I felt not the slightest inconvenience from the vermin, though I certainly made a point to avoid the Scotchman and the cripple. On the following day, I confessed; and never was an unfortunate soul so grievously afflicted with a bad memory as I was on that occasion—the whole thing altogether, but particularly the prison scene, had knocked me up, I could not therefore remember a tithe of my sins; and the priest, poor man, had really so much to do, and was in such a hurry, that he had me clean absolved before I had got half through the preface, or knew what I was about. I then went with a fresh batch to receive the sacrament, which I did from the hands of the good-humoured gentleman who enjoyed so richly the praying talents of the hare-lipped devotee in the prison.

I cannot avoid mentioning here a practice peculiar to Roman Catholics, which consists in an exchange of one or more prayers, by a stipulation between two persons: *I offer up a pater and ave* for you, and you again for me. It is called *swapping* or exchanging *prayers*. After I had received the sacrament, I observed a thin, sallow little man, with a pair of beads, as long as himself, moving from knot to knot, but never remaining long in the same place. At last he glided up to me, and in a whisper asked me if I knew him. I answered in the negative. "Oh, then, a launa, ye war never here before?" "Never." "Oh, I see that, a cushla, you would a-known me if you had: well then, did ye never hear of Sol Donnel, the pilgrim?"

"I never did," I replied, "but are we not all pilgrims while here?"

"To be sure, aroon, but I'm a pilgrim every place else, you see, as well as here, my darlin' sweet young man."

"Then you're a pilgrim by profession?" "That's it, astore machree: everybody that comes here the second time, sure, knows Sol Donnel, the blessed pilgrim."

"In that case it was impossible for me to know you, as I was never here before." "A cushla, I know that, but a good beginnin' are ye makin' of it—an' at your time of life too; but, avick, it must prosper wid ye, comin' here I mane."

"I hope it may." "Well yer parents isn't both livin' it's likely?" "No." "Aye! but ye'll jist not forget that same, ye see; I b'lieve I sed so—your father dead, I suppose?" "No, my mother." "Your mother; well, avick, I didn't say that for a sartinty; but still, ye see, avourneen, maybe somebody could a tould ye it was the mother, perhaps, afther all." "Did you know them?" I asked. "You see, a lanna, I can't say that, widout first hearin' their names." "My name is B——." "An' a dacent bearable name it is, darlin'. Is yer father of them dacent people, the B——s of Newtownlinavady, a hagur?" "Not that I know of." "Oh well, well, it makes no maxim between you an' me, at all, at all; but the Lord mark you to grace, any how; it's a dacent name sure enough, only if yer mother was livin', it's herself 'ud be the proud woman, an' well she might, to see sich a clane, promisin' son steppin' home to her from Lough Derg." "Indeed I'm obliged to you," said I; "I protest I'm obliged to you, for your good opinion of me." "It's nothin' but what ye desarve, avick! an' more nor that—yer the makin's of a clergy I'm guessin'?" "I am," said I, "surely designed for that." "Oh, I knew it, I knew it, it's in your face; you've the *sogarth* in yer very face; an' well will ye become the *robes* when ye get them on ye: sure, an' to tell you the truth (in a whisper, stretching up his mouth to my ear), I feel my heart warm towardst you, somehow." "I declare I feel much the same towards you," I returned, for the fellow in spite of me was gaining upon my good opinion; "you are a decent, civil soul." "An' for that raison, and for your dacent mother's sake (*sobies-coat in passy, amin* *), I'll jist here *offer up* the *grey profungus* † for the relase of her sowl out o' the burnin' flames of purgathur." I really could not help shuddering at this. He then repeated a psalm for that purpose, the 130th in our Bible, but the 129th in theirs. When it was finished, with all due gesticulation, that is to say, having thumped his breast with great violence, kissed the ground, and crossed himself repeatedly, he says to me, like a man confident that he had paved his way to my good graces, "Now, avick, as we *did* do so much, you're the very darlin' young man that I won't lave, widout the best, maybe, that's to come yet, ye see; becase I'll *swap a prayer* wid you, this blessed minute." "I'm very glad you mentioned it," said I. "But you don't know, maybe, darlin', that I'm undher five ordhers." "Dear me! is it possible you're under so many?" "Undher five ordhers, acushla!"—"Well," I replied, "I am ready."—"Undher five ordhers—but I'll lave it to yourself; only when it's over, maybe, ye'll hear somethin' from me that'll make you thankful you ever giv'd me silver, any way."

By this time I saw his drift; but he really had managed his point so dexterously—not forgetting the *De profundis*—that I gave him tencepce in silver: he pocketed it with great alacrity, and was at the prayer in a

* Requiescat in pace.

† De profundis.

twinkling, which he did offer up in prime style—five *paters*, five *aves*, and a-creed, whilst I set the same number to his credit. When we had finished, he made me kneel down to receive his blessing, which he gave in great form:—“Now,” said he, in a low, important tone, “I’m goin’ to show you a thing that’ll make you bless the born day you ever seen my face; an’ it’s this—did ye ever hear of the blessed *Thirty Days’ Prayer*?*” “I can’t say I did.” “Well, avick, in good time still; but there’s a blessed book, if ye can get it, that has a prayer in it, named the *Thirty Days’ Prayer*, an’ if ye jist repate that same, every day for thirty days fastin’, there’s no request ye’ll ax from heaven, good, bad, or indifferent, but ye’ll get. And now do you begrudge givin’ me what I got?” “Not a bit,” said I, “and I’ll certainly look for the book.” “No, no, the darlin’ fine young man,” soliloquising aloud—“Well and well did I know you wouldn’t, nor another along wid it—sensible and learned as ye are, to know the blessed worth of what ye got for it; not makin’, at the same time, any comparishment at all at all atween it and the dirty thrash of riches of this earth, that every wan has their heart fixed upon—exceptin’ them that the Lord gives the larnin’ an’ the edication to, to know betther.”

Oh, flattery! flattery! and a touch of hypocrisy on my part! Between ye, did ye make another lodgment on my purse, which was instantly lightened by an additional bank token, value tenpence, handed over to this sugar-tongued old knave. When he pocketed this, he shook me cordially by the hand, bidding me “not to forgit the *Thirty Days’ Prayer*, at any rate.” He then glided off, with his small, sallow face, stuck between his little shrugged shoulders, fingering his beads, and praying audibly with great apparent fervour, whilst his little keen eye was reconnoitring for another pigeon. In the course of a few minutes, I saw him lead a large, soft, warm-looking, countryman, over to a remote corner, and enter into an earnest conversation with him, which, I could perceive, ended by their both kneeling down, I suppose, to *swap a prayer*; and I have no doubt but he lightened the honest countryman’s purse, as well as mine.

On the third day I was determined, if possible, to leave it early; so I performed my third and last station round the chapel and the beds, reduced to such a state of weakness and hunger, that the coats of my stomach must have been rubbing against each other; my feet were quite shapeless. I therefore made the shortest circuit and the longest strides possible, until I finished it.

I witnessed this day, immediately before my departure from this gloomy and truly purgatorial settlement, a scene of some interest. A priest was standing before the door of the dwelling-house, giving tickets to such as were about to confess, this being a necessary point. When he had despatched them all, I saw an old man and his son approach him, the man seemingly sixty, the boy about fourteen. They had a look of peculiar decency, but were thin and emaciated, even beyond what the rigour of their penance here could produce. The youth tottered with weakness, and the old man supported him with much difficulty. It is right to mention here, that this pilgrimage was performed in a season† when sick-

* There is such a prayer, and I have often seen it in Catholic Prayer-books.

† 1817.

ness and famine prevailed fearfully in this kingdom. They advanced up to the priest to pay their money on receiving their tickets; he extended his palm from habit, but did not speak. The old man had some silver in his hand; and as he was about to give it to the priest, I saw the child look up beseechingly in his father's face, whilst an additional paleness came over his own, and his eyes filled with tears. The father saw and felt the appeal of the child, and hesitated; the priest's arm was still extended, his hand open:—"Would you, Sir," said the old man, addressing the priest, "be good enough to hear a word from me?" For what?" replied the priest, in a sharp tone. "Why, Sir," answered the old man, "I am very much distressed." "Ay—it is the common story! Come, pay the money; don't you see I've no time to lose?" "I won't detain you a minute, Sir," said the man; "this child"—"You want to keep the money, then? that's your object; down with it on the instant, and begone."

The old man dropped it into the priest's hand, in a kind of start, produced by the stern tone of voice in which he was addressed. When the priest got the money he seemed in a better humour, not wishing, I could see, to send the man away with a bad impression of him. "Well, now what's that you were going to say to me?" "Why, Sir," resumed the old man, "that I have not a penny in my possession behind what I have just now put into your hand—not the price of a morsel for this child or myself, although we have forty miles to travel!" "Well, and how am I to remedy that? What brought you here, if you had not what would bear your expenses?" "I had, Sir, on setting out; but my little boy was five days sick in Petigo, and *that* took away with it what we had to carry us home." "And you expect me, in short, to furnish you with money to do that? Do you think, my good man, there are not *paupers* in my own parish, that have a better right to assistance than you have?" "I do not doubt it, Sir," said he, "I do not doubt it; and as for myself I could crawl home upon anything; but what is this child to do? he is already sinking with hunger and—" The poor man's utterance here failed him, as he cast his eyes on the poor, pale boy. When he had recovered himself a little, he proceeded:—"He is all that it has pleased God to leave to his afflicted mother and me, out of seven of them. His other brother and sister and him were all we had living for some years; they are seven weeks dead yesterday, of the fever; and when *he* was given over, Sir, his mother and I vowed, that if God would spare him to us, either she or I would bring him to the 'Island,' as soon as he would be able for the journey. He was but weakly settin' out, and we had no notion that the station was so tryin' as it is: it has nearly overcome my child, and how he will be able to walk forty miles in this weak, sickly state, God only knows." "Oh! Sir," said the boy, "my poor father is worse off and weaker than I am, and he is sick too, Sir; I'm only weak, but not sick; but my poor father's both weak and sick," said he, his tears streaming from him, as he pressed his father's arm to his breast—"my poor father is both weak and sick, ay, and hungry too," said he. "Take this," said the priest, "it is as much as I can afford to give you," putting a silver fivepenny-piece into his hand; "there's a great deal of

poor in my own parish." *Alas! thought I, you are not a father.* "Indeed, Sir," said the poor man, "I thought you would have allowed me to keep the silver I gave you, as how can we travel two-and-forty miles on this?" "I tell you, my good man," said the priest, resuming a sterner tone, "I have done as much for you as I can afford; and if every one gives you as much, you won't be ill off."

The tears stood in the old man's eyes, as he fixed them hopelessly upon his boy, whilst the child looked ravenously at the money, trifling as it was, and seemed to think of nothing except getting the worth of it of food. As they left the priest, "Oh, come, come, father," said the little fellow, "come, and let us get something to eat." "Easy, dear, till I draw my breath a little, for, John, *I am weak*; but the Lord is strong, and will bring us home, if we put our trust in him; for if he's not more merciful to his poor creatures, than some that acts in his name here, John, we would have a bad chance." They here sat down on the ledge of a rock, a few yards from the chapel, and I still remained bound to the spot by the interest I felt in what I had just witnessed. "What do you want, Sir," said the priest to me; "did you get your ticket?" "I did, Sir," I replied; "but I hope you will permit me to become an advocate for that poor man and his son, as I think their case is one in which life and death are probably concerned!" "Really, my good young man, you may spare your advocacy, I'm not to be duped with such tales as you've heard." "By the tale, Sir, if tale you call it," I returned, "which the father told, I think, any man might be guided in his charity; but really I think the most pitiful story was to be read in their faces." "Do you think so? Well, if that's your opinion, I'm sure you have a fair opportunity of being charitable; as for me, I have no more time to lose with either you or them," said he, going into a comfortable house, whilst I could have fairly seen him up to the neck in the blessed element about us. I here stepped over, and instantly desired the old man to hand me the fivepence, telling him at the same time that there was something better in prospect, as a proof of which I gave him half-a-crown. I then returned to the priest, and laid his fivepence down on the table before him; for I had the generosity, the fire, and the candour of youth about me, unrepressed by the hardening experience of life. "What's this, Sir?" said he. "Your money, Sir," I replied—"it is such a *very* trifle, that it would be of no service to them, and they will be enabled to go home without it: the old man returns it." "That is as much as to say," he replied sarcastically, "that you will patronize them yourself; I wish you joy of it. Was it to witness the distresses of others that you came to the island, let me ask?" "Perhaps I came from a worse motive," I returned. "I haven't the least doubt of it," said he; "but move off—one word of insolence more," said he, stretching to a cutting whip, for the use of which he was deservedly famous—"I will cut you up, sirrah, while I'm able to stand over you." "Upon my word," said I, extending my feet one after another, "you have cut me up pretty well already, I think; but," I added, with coolness, "is that, Sir, the weapon of a Christian?" "Is it the weapon of a Christian, Sir? whatever weapon it is, you will soon feel the weight of it," said he, brandishing it over my head. "My good

father," said I, "do you remember, since nothing else will restrain you, that the laws of the country will not recognise such *horseship* Christianity?" "The laws of the country! Oh, God help it for a country! Yes! yes! excellent. Hera, Michael—I say, come here—drive out this fellow. I'll be calm; I'll not put myself in a passion—out with him! this fellow." On turning round to contemplate the person spoken to, we recognised each other as slight acquaintances. "Bless me," said he, "what's the matter? Why," he added, addressing me, "what's this?" "How? do you know him, Michael?" "Tut, I do—isn't he *for the mission*?" "Oh—ho!—is that it? well, I'm glad I know so much; good-bye to you, for the present; never fear but I'll keep my eye upon you." So saying, we separated. Michael followed me out—"This is an awkward business," said he, "you had better *make submission*, and ask his pardon; for you know he can injure your prospects, and will do so, if you don't submit; he is not of the most forgiving cast—but that's between ourselves." "What o'clock is it?" said I. "Near three." "Well, good bye, and God bless you: if he had a spark of humanity in him, I would beg his pardon at once, if I thought I had offended him; but as to *making submission* to *such* a man, as you call it—why—this is a very sultry day, my friend." I returned directly to the old man and his son; and, let purity of motive go as it may, truth to tell, they were no losers by the priest's conduct; as I certainly slipped them a few additional shillings, out of sheer contempt for him. On tasting a little refreshment in one of the cabins, the son fainted—but on the whole they were enabled to accomplish their journey home; and the father's blessing was surely a sufficient antidote against the priest's resentment.

I was now ready to depart; and on my way to the boat, found my two old female companions watching, lest I should pass, and they might miss my company on the way. It was now past three o'clock, and we determined to travel as far as we could that night, as the accommodations were vile in Petigo; and the spokeswoman mentioned a house of entertainment, about twelve miles forward, where, she said, we would find better treatment. When we got on *terra firma*, the first man I saw was the monosyllabic humourist, sitting on a hillock resting himself—his eyes fixed on the earth, and he evidently in a brown study on what he had gone through. He was drawing in his breath gradually, his cheeks expanding all the while, until they reached the utmost point of distension, when he would all at once let it go with a kind of easy puff, ending in a groan, as he surveyed his naked feet, which were now quite square, and like my own, out of all shape. I asked him how he liked the station; he gave me one of the old looks, shrugged his shoulders, but said nothing—it was, however, a shrug condemnatory. I then asked him would he ever make another pilgrimage? He answered me by another shrug, a grave look, drily raising his eye-brows, and a second appeal to his feet, all of which I easily translated into strong negatives. We refreshed ourselves in Petigo.

When we were on the way home, I observed that, although the singular and fatal accident which befel the young man in the prison, excited very little interest at the time of its occurrence, yet no sooner had they who witnessed it got clear of the island, than it was given with every

possible ornament; so that it would be as easy to recognise the plain fact, when decked out by their elucidations, as it would be to understand the sense of an original author, after it has come through the hands of half a hundred commentators. But human nature is a darker enigma than any you could find in the "Lady's Magazine." Who would suppose, for instance, that it was the same motive which set their tongues wagging now, that had chained their spirits by the strong force of the marvellous and the terrible, while they were in prison! Yet this was the fact; but their influence hung while there, like the tyrant's sword, over each individual head; and until the danger of falling asleep in the "Prison" was past, they could feel no interest for anything beyond themselves. In both cases, however, they were governed by the force of the marvellous and the terrible.

When we had finished our journey for the day, I was glad to find a tolerable bed; and never did man enjoy such a luxury of sweet sleep as I did that night. My old companion, too, evinced an attention to me seldom experienced in an accidental traveller. She made them get down water and bathe my feet, and asked me at what hour I would set out in the morning, telling me that she would see my clothes brushed, and everything done herself—so minute was the honest creature in her little attentions. I told her I would certainly take a nap in the morning, as I had slept so little for the last three nights, and was besides so fatigued. "Musha to be sure, and why not, agra! afther the hard bout you had in that blessed Island! betoken that you 're tinder and too soft rared to bear it like them that the work hardens; sleep!—to be sure you 'll sleep your fill—you want it, in course; and now go to bed, and you'll appear quite another man in the mornin', plaise God!"

I did not awake the next morning till ten o'clock, when I found the sun shining full into the room. I accordingly dressed myself partially, and I say *partially*—for I was rather surprised to find an unexpected chasm in my wardrobe: neither my hat, coat, nor waistcoat being forthcoming. But I immediately made myself easy, by supposing that my kind companion had brought them to be brushed. Yet I relapsed into something more than surprise when I saw my fellow-traveller's redoubtable jacket lying on the seat of a chair, and her hare-skin cap on the top of it. My misgivings now were anything but weak; nor was I at all improved, either in my religion or philosophy, when, on calling up the landlady, I heard that my two companions had set out that morning at four o'clock. I then inquired about my clothes, but all to no purpose; the poor landlady knew nothing about them: which, in fact, was the case; but she told me that the old one brushed them before she went away, saying that they were ready for me to put on whenever I wanted them. "Well," said I, "she *has* made another man of me." The landlady desired me to try if I had my purse; and I found that the kind creature had certainly spared my purse, but showed no mercy at all to what it contained, which was one pound in paper, and a few shillings in silver—the latter, however, she left me. I had now no alternative but to don the jacket and the hare-skin cap, which, when I had done, with as bad a grace and as mortified a visage as ever man dressed himself

with, I found I had not the slightest encouragement to throw my eye over the uniform gravity of my appearance, as I used to do in the black ; for, alas ! that which I was proudest of, viz. the clerical cut which it bestowed upon me, was fairly gone—I had now more the appearance of a poacher than a priest.

In this trim did I return to my friends—a goose stripped of my feathers ; a dupe beknaved and beplundered—having been almost starved to death in the “ island,” and nearly cudgelled by one of the priests. As soon as I crossed the threshold at home, the whole family were on their knees to receive my blessing, there being a peculiar virtue in the Lough Derg blessing. The next thing I did, after giving them an account of the manner in which I was plundered and stripped, was to make a due distribution of the pebbles* of the lake, to contain which my sisters had, previous to my journey, wrought me a little silk bag. This I brought home, stuffed as full as my purse was empty ; for the epicene old villain left it to me in all its plenitude—disdaining to touch it. When I went to mass the following Sunday, I was surrounded by crowds, among whom I distributed my blessing, with an air of seriousness not at all lessened by the loss of my clothes and the emptying of my purse. On telling that part of my story to the priest, he laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks. He was a small, pleasant little man, who was seldom known to laugh at anybody’s joke but his own. Now the said merriment of the Reverend Father I felt as contributing to make me look exceedingly ridiculous and sheepish. “So,” says he, “you have fallen foul of Nell M’Collum, the most notorious shuler in the province ! a gipsy, a fortune-teller, and a tinker’s widow ; but rest contented, you are not the first she has gulled—but beware the next time.”—“There is no danger of *that*,” said I, with peculiar emphasis.

* An uncommon virtue in curing all kinds of complaints is ascribed to these pebbles, small bags of which are brought home by the pilgrims, and distributed to their respective relations and friends.





THE HEDGE SCHOOL

THERE never was a more unfounded calumny, than that which would impute to the Irish peasantry an indifference to education. I may, on the contrary, fearlessly assert that the lower orders of no country ever manifested such a positive inclination for literary acquirements, and that too, under circumstances strongly calculated to produce carelessness and apathy on this particular subject. Nay, I do maintain, that he who is intimately acquainted with the character of our countrymen, must acknowledge, that their zeal for book learning, not only is strong and ardent, when opportunities of scholastic education occur, but that it increases in proportion as these opportunities are rare and unattainable. The very name and nature of Hedge Schools are proof of this: for what stronger point could be made out, in illustration of my position, than the fact, that, despite of obstacles, the very idea of which would crush ordinary enterprise — when not even a shed could be obtained in which to assemble the children of an Irish village, the worthy pedagogue selected the first green spot on the sunny side of a quickset-thorn hedge, which he conceived adapted for his purpose, and there, under the scorching rays of a summer sun, and in defiance of spies and statutes, carried on the work of instruction. From this circumstance the name of Hedge School originated; and, however it may be associated with the ludicrous, I maintain, that it is highly creditable to the character of the people, and an encouragement to those who wish to see them receive pure and correct educational know-

ledge. A Hedge School, however, in its original sense, was but a temporary establishment, being only adopted until such a school-house could be erected, as was in those days deemed sufficient to hold such a number of children as were expected, at all hazards, to attend it.

The opinion, I know, which has been long entertained of Hedge Schoolmasters, was, and still is, unfavourable; but the character of these worthy and eccentric persons has been misunderstood, for the stigma attached to their want of knowledge should have rather been applied to their want of morals, because, on this latter point were they principally indefensible. The fact is, that Hedge Schoolmasters were a class of men, from whom morality was not expected by the peasantry; for, strange to say, one of their strongest recommendations to the good opinion of the people, as far as their literary talents and qualifications were concerned, was an inordinate love of whiskey, and if to this could be added a slight touch of derangement, the character was complete.

On once asking an Irish peasant, why he sent his children to a schoolmaster who was notoriously addicted to spirituous liquors, rather than to a man of sober habits who taught in the same neighbourhood,

"Why do I send them to Mat Meegan, is it?" he replied—"and do you think, Sir," said he, "that I'd send them to that dry-headed dunce, Mr. Frazher, with his black coat upon him, and his caroline hat, and him wouldn't take a glass of poteen wanst in seven years? Mat, Sir, likes it, and teaches the boys ten times better whin he's dhrunk nor when he's sober; and you'll never find a good tacher, Sir, but's fond of it. As for Mat, when he's *half gone*, I'd turn him agin the country for deepness in larning; for it's then he rhymes it out of him, that it would do one good to hear him."

"So," said I, "you think that a love of drinking poteen is a sign of talent in a schoolmaster?"

"Ay, or in any man else, Sir," he replied. "Look at tradesmen, and 'tis always the cleverest that you'll find fond of the dhrink! If you had hard Mat and Frazher, the other evening, at it—what a hare Mat made of him! but he was just in proper tune for it, being, at the time, purty well I thank you, and did not lave him a leg to stand upon. He took him in Euclid's Ailments and Logicals, and proved in Frazher's teeth, that the candlestick before them was the church-steeple, and Frazher himself the parson; and so sign was on it, the other couldn't disprove it, but had to give in."

"Mat, then," I observed, "is the most learned man on this walk."

"Why, thin, I doubt that same, Sir," replied he, "for all he's so great in the books; for, you see, while they were ding dust at it, who comes in but mad Delany, and he attacked Mat, and, in less than go time, rubbed the consate out of *him*, as clane as *he* did out of Frazher."

"Who is Delany?" I inquired.

"He was the makings of a priest, Sir, and was in Maynooth a couple of years, but he took in the knowledge so fast, that, bedad, he got *cracked wid larnin'*—for a *dunce*, you see, never cracks wid it, in regard of the thickness of the skull: no doubt but he's too many for Mat, and can go

far beyond him in the books ; but then, like Mat, he's still brightest when he has a sup in his head."

These are prejudices which the Irish peasantry have long entertained concerning the character of hedge-schoolmasters ; but, granting them to be unfounded, as they generally are, yet it is an indisputable fact, that hedge-schoolmasters were as superior in literary knowledge and acquirements to the class of men who are now engaged in the general education of the people, as they were beneath them in moral and religious character. The former part of this assertion will, I am aware, appear rather startling to many. But it is true ; and one great cause why the character of Society Teachers is undervalued, in many instances, by the people, proceeds from a conviction on their parts, that they are, and must be, incapable, from the slender portion of learning they have received, of giving their children a sound and practical education.

But that we may put this subject in a clearer light, we will give a sketch of the course of instruction which was deemed necessary for a hedge-schoolmaster, and let it be contrasted with that which falls to the lot of those engaged in the conducting of schools patronized by the Education Societies of the present day.

When a poor man, about twenty or thirty years ago, understood from the schoolmaster who educated his sons, that any of them was particularly "cute at his larnin'," the ambition of the parent usually directed itself to one of three objects—he would either make him a priest, a clerk, or a schoolmaster. The determination once fixed, the boy was set apart from every kind of labour, that he might be at liberty to bestow his undivided time and talents to the object set before him. His parents strained every nerve to furnish him with the necessary books, and always took care that his appearance and dress should be more decent than those of any other member of the family. If the church were in prospect, he was distinguished, after he had been two or three years at his Latin, by the appellation of "the young priest," an epithet to him of the greatest pride and honour ; but if destined only to wield the ferula, his importance in the family, and the narrow circle of his friends, was by no means so great. If, however, the goal of his future ambition as a schoolmaster was humbler, that of his literary career was considerably extended. He usually remained at the next school in the vicinity until he supposed that he had completely drained the master of all his knowledge. This circumstance was generally discovered in the following manner:—As soon as he judged himself a match for his teacher, and possessed sufficient confidence in his own powers, he penned him a formal challenge to meet him in literary contest, either in his own school, before competent witnesses, or at the chapel-green, on the Sabbath day, before the arrival of the priest, or probably after it—for the priest himself was sometimes the moderator and judge upon these occasions. This challenge was generally couched in rhyme, and either sent by the hands of a common friend, or posted upon the chapel-door.

These contests, as the reader perceives, were always public, and were witnessed by the peasantry with intense interest. If the master sustained a defeat, it was not so much attributed to his want of learning, as to the

overwhelming talent of his opponent; nor was the success of the pupil generally followed by the expulsion of the master—for this was but the first of a series of challenges which the former proposed to undertake, ere he eventually settled himself in the exercise of his profession.

I remember being present at one of them, and a ludicrous exhibition it was. The parish priest, a red-faced, jocular little man, was president; and his curate, a scholar of six feet two inches in height, and a schoolmaster from the next parish, were judges. I will only touch upon two circumstances in their conduct, which evinced a close, instinctive knowledge of human nature in the combatants. The master would not condescend to argue off his throne—a piece of policy to which, in my opinion, he owed his victory (for he won); whereas the pupil insisted that he should meet him on equal ground, face to face, in the lower end of the room. It was evident that the latter could not divest himself of his boyish terror so long as the other sat, as it were, in the plenitude of his former authority, contracting his brows with habitual sternness, thundering out his arguments, with a most menacing and Stentorian voice, while he thumped his desk with his shut fist, or struck it with his great ruler at the end of each argument, in a manner that made the youngster put his hands behind him several times, to be certain that that portion of his dress which is *unmentionable*, was tight upon him.

If in these encounters the young candidate for the honours of the literary sceptre was not victorious, he again resumed his studies, under his old preceptor, with renewed vigour and becoming humility; but if he put the schoolmaster down, his next object was to seek out some other teacher, whose celebrity was unclouded within his own range. With him he had a fresh encounter, and its result was similar to what I have already related. If victorious, he sought out another and more learned opponent; and if defeated, he became the pupil of his conqueror—going night about, during his sojourn at the school, with the neighbouring farmers' sons, whom he assisted in their studies, as a compensation for his support. He was called during these peregrinations, the *Poor Scholar*, a character which secured him the esteem and hospitable attention of the peasantry, who never fail in respect to any one characterised by a zeal for learning and knowledge.

In this manner he proceeded, a literary knight errant, filled with a chivalrous love of letters, which would have done honour to the most learned peripatetic of them all; enlarging his own powers, and making fresh acquisitions of knowledge as he went along. His contests, his defeats, and his triumphs, of course, were frequent; and his habits of thinking and reasoning must have been considerably improved, his acquaintance with classical and mathematical authors rendered more intimate, and his powers of illustration and comparison more clear and happy. After three or four years spent in this manner, he usually returned to his native place, sent another challenge to the schoolmaster, in the capacity of a candidate for his situation, and, if successful, drove him out of the district, and established himself in his situation. The vanquished master sought a new district, sent a new challenge, in his turn, to some other

teacher, and usually put him to flight in the same manner. The terms of defeat or victory, according to their application, were called *sacking* and *bogging*.

"There was a great argument entirely, sir," said a peasant once, when speaking of these contests, "'twas at the chapel on Sunday week, betune young Tom Brady, that was a poor scholar in Munsther, and Mr. Hartigan, the schoolmaster."

"And who was victorious?" I inquired.

"Why, sir, and maybe 'twas young Brady that didn't *sack* him clane before the priest and all, and went nigh to *bog* the priest himself in Greek. His Reverence was only two words beyant him; but he sacked the mas-ther any how, and showed him in the Grammatical and Dixonary where he was wrong."

"And what is Brady's object in life?" I asked. "What does he intend to do?"

"Intend to do, is it? I m tould nothing less nor going into Thrinity College in Dublin, and expects to bate them all there, out and out: he's first to make something they call a seizure;* and, afther making that good, he's to be a counsellor. So, sir, you see what it is to resave good schoolin', and to have the larnin'; but, indeed, it's Brady that's the great head-piece entirely."

Unquestionably, many who received instruction in this manner have distinguished themselves in the Dublin University: and I have no hesitation in saying, that young men educated in Irish hedge-schools, as they were called, have proved themselves to be better classical scholars and mathematicians, generally speaking, than any proportionate number of those educated in our first-rate academies. The Munster masters have long been, and still are, particularly celebrated for making excellent classical and mathematical scholars.

That a great deal of ludicrous pedantry generally accompanied this knowledge is not at all surprising, when we consider the rank these worthy teachers held in life, and the stretch of inflation at which their pride was kept by the profound reverence excited by their learning among the people. It is equally true, that each of them had a stock of *orambos* ready for accidental encounter, which would have puzzled Euclid or Sir Isaac Newton himself; but even these trained their minds to habits of acuteness and investigation. When a schoolmaster of this class had established himself as a good mathematician, the predominant enjoyment of his heart and life was to write the epithet *Philomath* after his name; and this, whatever document he subscribed, was never omitted. If he witnessed a will, it was Timothy Fagan Philomath; if he put his name to a promissory note, it was Tim. Fagan, Philomath; if he addressed a love-letter to his sweetheart, it was still Timothy Fagan—or whatever the name might be—Philomath; and this was always written in legible and distinct copyhand, sufficiently large to attract the observation of the reader.

It was also usual for a man who had been a pre-eminent and extraor-

* Sizar.

dinary scholar, to have the epithet GREAT prefixed to his name. I remember one of this description, who was called the *Great O'Brien, par excellence*. In the latter years of his life he gave up teaching, and led a circulating life, going round from school to school, and remaining a week or a month alternately among his brethren. His visits were considered an honour, and raised considerably the literary character of those with whom he resided; for he spoke of dunces with the most dignified contempt, and the general impression was, that he would scorn even to avail himself of their hospitality. Like most of his brethren, he could not live without the *poteen*; and his custom was, to drink a pint of it in its native purity before he entered into any literary contest, or made any display of his learning at wakes or other Irish festivities; and most certainly, however blameable the practice, and injurious to health and morals, it threw out his talents and his powers in a most surprising manner.

It was highly amusing to observe the peculiarity which the consciousness of superior knowledge impressed upon the conversation and personal appearance of this decaying race. Whatever might have been the original conformation of their physical structure, it was sure, by the force of acquired habit, to transform itself into a stiff, erect, consequential, and unbending manner, ludicrously characteristic of an inflated sense of their extraordinary knowledge, and a proud and commiserating contempt of the dark ignorance by which, in despite of their own light, they were surrounded. Their conversation, like their own *crambos*, was dark and difficult to be understood; their words, truly sesquipedalian; their voice, loud and commanding in its tones; their deportment, grave and dictatorial, but completely indescribable, and certainly original to the last degree, in those instances where the ready, genuine humour of their country maintained an unyielding rivalry in their disposition, against the natural solemnity which was considered necessary to keep up the due dignity of their character.

In many of these persons, where the original gaiety of the disposition was known, all efforts at the grave and dignified were complete failures, and these were enjoyed by the peasantry and their own pupils, nearly with the sensations which the enactment of Hamlet by Liston would necessarily produce. At all events, their education, allowing for the usual exceptions, was by no means superficial; and the reader has already received a sketch of the trials which they had to undergo, before they considered themselves qualified to enter upon the duties of their calling. Their life was, in fact, a state of literary warfare; and they felt that a mere elementary knowledge of their business would have been insufficient to carry them, with suitable credit, through the attacks to which they were exposed from travelling teachers, whose mode of establishing themselves in schools, was, as I said, by driving away the less qualified, and usurping their places. This, according to the law of opinion and the custom which prevailed, was very easily effected, for the peasantry uniformly encouraged those whom they supposed to be the most competent: as to moral or religious instruction, neither was expected from them, so that the indifference of the moral character was no bar to their success.

The village of Findramore was situated at the foot of a long green hill, the outline of which formed a low arch, as it rose to the eye against the horizon. This hill was studded with clumps of beeches, and sometimes enclosed as a meadow. In the month of July, when the grass on it was long, many an hour have I spent in solitary enjoyment, watching the wavy motion produced upon its pliant surface by the sunny winds, or the flight of the cloud-shadows, like gigantic phantoms, as they swept rapidly over it, whilst the murmur of the rocking trees, and the glancing of their bright leaves in the sun, produced a heartfelt pleasure, the very memory of which rises in my imagination like some fading recollection of a brighter world.

At the foot of this hill ran a clear, deep-banked river, bounded on one side by a slip of rich, level meadow, and on the other by a kind of common for the village geese, whose white feathers, during the summer season, lay scattered over its green surface. It was also the play-ground for the boys of the village school; for there ran that part of the river which, with very correct judgment, the urchins had selected as their bathing-place. A little slope, or watering-ground in the bank, brought them to the edge of the stream, where the bottom fell away into the fearful depths of the whirlpool, under the hanging oak on the other bank. Well do I remember the first time I ventured to swim across it, and even yet do I see, in imagination, the two bunches of water flaggons on which the inexperienced swimmers trusted themselves in the water.

About two hundred yards above this, the *boreen*,* which led from the village to the main road, crossed the river, by one of those old narrow bridges whose arches rise like round ditches across the road—an almost impassable barrier to horse and car. On passing the bridge, in a northern direction, you found a range of low thatched houses on each side of the road: and if one o'clock, the hour of dinner, drew near, you might observe columns of blue smoke curling up from a row of chimneys, some made of wicker creels plastered over with a rich coat of mud; some, of old, narrow, bottomless tubs; and others, with a greater appearance of taste, ornamented with thick, circular ropes of straw, sewed together like bees' skeps, with the peel of a brier; and many having nothing but the open vent above. But the smoke by no means escaped by its legitimate aperture, for you might observe little clouds of it bursting out of the doors and windows; the panes of the latter being mostly stopped at other times with old hats and rags, were now left entirely open for the purpose of giving it a free escape.

Before the doors, on right and left, was a series of dunghills, each with its concomitant sink of green, rotten water; and if it happened that a stout-looking woman, with watery eyes, and a yellow cap hung loosely upon her matted locks, came, with a chubby urchin on one arm, and a pot of dirty water in her hand, its unceremonious ejection in the aforesaid sink would be apt to send you up the village with *your finger and thumb* (for what purpose you would yourself perfectly understand) *closely, but not knowingly, applied to your nostrils.* But, independently of *this, you*

* A little road.

would be apt to have other reasons for giving your horse, whose heels are by this time surrounded by a dozen of barking curs, and the same number of shouting urchins, a pretty sharp touch of the spurs, as well as for complaining bitterly of the odour of the atmosphere. It is no landscape without figures; and you might notice, if you are, as I suppose you to be, a man of observation, in every sink as you pass along, a "slip of a pig," stretched in the middle of the mud, the very *beau idéal* of luxury giving occasionally a long, luxuriant grunt, highly expressive of his enjoyment; or, perhaps, an old farrower, lying in indolent repose, with half a dozen young ones jostling each other for their draught, and punching her belly with their little snouts, reckless of the fumes they are creating; whilst the loud crow of the cock, as he confidently flaps his wings on his own dunghill, gives the warning note for the hour of dinner.

As you advance, you will also perceive several faces thrust out of the doors, and rather than miss a sight of you, a grotesque visage peeping by a short cut through the paneless windows—or a tattered female flying to snatch up her urchin that has been tumbling itself, heels up, in the dust of the road, lest "the gentleman's horse might ride over it;" and if you happen to look behind, you may observe a shaggy-headed youth in tattered frize, with one hand thrust indolently in his breast, standing at the door in conversation with the inmates, a broad grin of sarcastic ridicule on his face, in the act of breaking a joke or two upon yourself, or your horse; or, perhaps, your jaw may be saluted with a lump of clay, just hard enough not to fall asunder as it flies, cast by some ragged gorseon from behind a hedge, who squats himself in a ridge of corn to avoid detection.

Seated upon a hob at the door, you may observe a toil-worn man, without coat or waistcoat; his red, muscular, sunburnt shoulder peering through the remnant of a shirt, mending his shoes with a piece of twisted flax, called a *lingel*, or, perhaps, sewing two footless stockings (*or martyens*) to his coat, as a substitute for sleeves.

In the gardens, which are usually fringed with nettles, you will see a solitary labourer, working with that carelessness and apathy that characterise an Irishman when he labours *for himself*—leaning upon his spade to look after you, and glad of any excuse to be idle.

The houses, however, are not all such as I have described—far from it. You see here and there, between the more humble cabins, a stout, comfortable-looking farm-house, with ornamental thatching and well-glazed windows; adjoining to which is a hay-yard, with five or six large stacks of corn, well-trimmed and roped, and a fine, yellow, weather-beaten old hay-rick, half cut—not taking into account twelve or thirteen circular strata of stones, that mark out the foundations on which others had been raised. Neither is the rich smell of oatmeal or wheaten bread, which the good wife is baking on the griddle, unpleasant to your nostrils; nor would the bubbling of a large pot, in which you might see, should you chance to enter, a prodigious square of fat, yellow, and almost transparent bacon tumbling about, to be an unpleasant object; truly, as it hangs over a large fire, with well-swept hearthstone, it is in good keeping with the white settle and chairs, and the dresser with noggins, wooden trenchers,

and pewter dishes, perfectly clean, and as well polished as a French courtier.

As you leave the village, you have, to the left, a view of the hill which I have already described, and to the right a level expanse of fertile country, bounded by a good view of respectable mountains, peering decently into the sky; and in a line that forms an acute angle from the point of the road where you ride, is a delightful valley, in the bottom of which shines a pretty lake; and a little beyond, on the slope of a green hill, rises a splendid house, surrounded by a park, well-wooded and stocked with deer. You have now topped the little hill above the village, and a straight line of level road, a mile long, goes forward to a country town, which lies immediately behind that white church with its spire cutting into the sky, before you. You descend on the other side, and, having advanced a few perches, look to the left, where you see a long, thatched chapel, only distinguished from a dwelling-house by its want of chimneys, and a small stone cross that stands on the top of the eastern gable; behind it is a graveyard; and beside it a snug public-house, well white-washed; then, to the right, you observe a door apparently in the side of a clay bank, which rises considerably above the pavement of the road. What! you ask yourself, can this be a human habitation?—but ere you have time to answer the question, a confused buzz of voices from within reaches your ear, and the appearance of a little “gorsoon,” with a red, close-cropped head and Milesian face, having in his hand a short, white stick, or the thigh-bone of a horse, which you at once recognise as “the pass” of a village school, gives you the full information. He has an ink-horn, covered with leather, dangling at the button-hole (for he has long since played away the buttons) of his frize jacket—his mouth is circumscribed with a streak of ink—his pen is stuck knowingly behind his ear—his shins are dotted over with fire-blisters, black, red, and blue—on each heel a kibe—his “leather crackers,” *videlicet*—breeches, shrunk up upon him, and only reaching as far down as the caps of his knees. Having spied you, he places his hand over his brows, to throw back the dazzling light of the sun, and peers at you from under it, till he breaks out into a laugh, exclaiming, half to himself, half to you,

“You a gintleman!—no, nor one of your breed never was, you procthorin’ thief, you!”

You are now immediately opposite the door of the seminary, when half a dozen of those seated next it notice you.

“Oh, sir, here’s a gintleman on a horse!—mather, sir, here’s a gintleman on a horse, wid boots and spurs on him, that’s looking in at us.”

“Silence!” exclaims the master;—“back from the door; boys rehearse; every one of you rehearse, I say, you Bcoticans, till the gintleman goes past!”

“I want to go out, if you plase, sir.”

“No, you don’t, Phelim.”

“I do, indeed, sir.”

“What!—is it afther conthradiotin’ me you’d be? Don’t you see the ‘porter’s’ out, and you can’t go.”

"Well, 'tis Mat Meehan has it, sir: and he's out this half-hour, sir; I can't stay in, sir—iphfff—iphfff!"

"You want to be idling your time looking at the gintleman, Phelim."

"No, indeed, sir—iphfff!"

"Phelim, I know you of ould—go to your sate. I tell you, Phelim, you were born for the encouragement of the hemp manufacture, and you'll die promoting it."

In the meantime, the master puts his head out of the door, his body stooped to a "half bend"—a phrase, and the exact curve which it forms, I leave for the present to your own sagacity—and surveys you until you pass. That is an Irish hedge-school, and the personage who follows you with his eye, a hedge-schoolmaster. His name is Matthew Kavanagh: and, as you seem to consider his literary establishment rather a curiosity in its kind, I will, if you be disposed to hear it, give you the history of him and his establishment, beginning, in the first place, with

THE ABDUCTION OF MAT KAVANAGH.

THE HEDGE SCHOOLMASTER.

For about three years before the period of which I write, the village of Findramore, and the parish in which it lay, were without a teacher. Mat's predecessor was a James Garraghty, a lame young man, the son of a widow, whose husband lost his life in attempting to extinguish a fire that broke out in the dwelling-house of Squire Johnston, a neighbouring magistrate. The son was a boy at the time of this disaster, and the Squire, as some compensation for the loss of his father's life in his service, had him educated at his own expense; that is to say, he gave the master who taught in the village orders to educate him gratuitously, on the condition of being horse-whipped out of the parish, if he refused. As soon as he considered himself qualified to teach, he opened a school in the village on his own account, where he taught until his death, which happened in less than a year after the commencement of his little seminary. The children usually assembled in his mother's cabin; but as she did not long survive the son, this, which was at best a very miserable residence, soon tottered to the ground. The roof and thatch were burnt for firing, the mud gables fell in, and were overgrown with grass, nettles, and docks; and nothing remained but a foot or two of the little clay side-walls, which presented, when associated with the calamitous fate of their inoffensive inmates, rather a touching image of ruin upon a small scale.

Garraghty had been attentive to his little pupils, and his instructions were sufficient to give them a relish for education—a circumstance which did not escape the observation of their parents, who duly appreciated it. His death, however, deprived them of this advantage; and as school-masters, under the old system, were always at a premium, it so happened, that for three years afterwards, not one of that class presented himself to their acceptance. Many a trial had been made, and many a sly offer held out, as a lure to the neighbouring teachers, but they did not take; for although the country was densely inhabited, yet it was remarked that

no schoolmaster ever "*Mur*" in the neighbourhood of Findramore. The place, in fact, had got a bad name. Garraghty died, it was thought, of poverty, a disease to which the Findramore schoolmasters had been always known to be subject. His predecessor, too, was hanged, along with two others, for burning the house of an "Aagint."

Then the Findramore boys were not easily dealt with, having an ugly habit of involving their unlucky teachers in those quarrels which they kept up with the Ballyscanlan boys, a fighting clan that lived at the foot of the mountains above them. These two factions, when they met, whether at fair or market, wake or wedding, could never part without carrying home on each side a dozen or two of bloody coxcombs. For these reasons, the parish of Aughindrum had for a few years been afflicted with an extraordinary dearth of knowledge; the only literary establishment which flourished in it being a parochial institution, which, however excellent in design, yet, like too many establishments of the same nature, it degenerated into a source of knowledge, morals, and education, exceedingly dry and unproductive to every person except the master, who was enabled by his honest industry to make a provision for his family absolutely surprising, when we consider the moderate nature of his ostensible income. It was, in fact, like a well dried up, to which scarcely any one ever thinks of going for water.

Such a state of things, however, could not last long. The youth of Findramore were parched for want of the dew of knowledge; and their parents and grown brethren met one Saturday evening in Barny Brady's shebeen-house, to take into consideration the best means for procuring a resident schoolmaster for the village and neighbourhood. It was a difficult point, and required great dexterity of management to enable them to devise any effectual remedy for the evil which they felt. There were present at this council, Tim Dolan, the senior of the village, and his three sons, Jem Coogan, Brian Murphy, Paddy Delany, Owen Roe O'Neil, Jack Traynor, and Andy Connell, with five or six others, whom it is not necessary to enumerate.

"Bring us in a quart, Barny," said Dolan to Brady, whom on this occasion we must designate as the host; "and let it be rale hathen."

"What do you mane, Tim?" replied the host.

"I mane," continued Dolan, "stuff that was never christened, man alive."

"Thin I'll bring you the same that Father Maguire got last night on his way home, afther anointin' ould Katty Duffy," replied Brady. "I'm sure, whatever I might be afther givin' to strangers, Tim, I'd be long sorry to give *you* anything but the right sort."

"That's a gay man, Barny," said Traynor, "but off wid you like a shot, and let us get it under our tooth first, an' then we'll tell you more about it.—A big rogue is the same Barny," he added, after Brady had gone to bring in the poteen, "an' never sells a dhrop that's not one whiskey and five wathers."

"But he couldn't expose it on *you*, Jack," observed Connell; "you're too ould a hand about the *pot* for that. Warn't you in the mountains last week?"

"Ay : but the curse of Cromwell upon the thief of a gauger, Simpson—himself and a pack o' redcoats surrounded us when we war beginnin' to double, and the purtiest *runnin'* that ever you seen was lost ; for you see, before you could cross yourself, we had the bottoms knocked elane out of the vessels ; so that the villains didn't get a hole in our coats, as they thought they would."

"I tell you," observed O'Neil, "there's a *bad pill** somewhere about us."

"Ay, is there, Owen," replied Traynor ; "and what is more, I don't think he's a hundhre miles from the place where we're sittin' in."

"Faith, maybe so, Jack," returned the other.

"I'd never give in to that," said Murphy. "'Tis Barny Brady that would never turn informer—the same thing isn't in him, nor in any of his breed ; there's not a man in the parish I'd thrust sooner."

"I'd jist thrust him," replied Traynor, "as far as I could throw a cow by the tail. Arrah, what's the rason that the gauger never looks next or near *his* place, an' it's well known that he sells poteen widout a license, though he goes past his door wanst a week ?"

"What the h—— is keepin' him at all ?" inquired one of Dolan's sons.

"Look at him," said Traynor, "comin' in out of the garden ; how much afeard he is ! keepin' the whiskey in a phatie ridge—an' I'd kiss the book that he brought that bottle out in his pocket, instead of diggin' it up out o' the garden."

Whatever Brady's usual habits of *christening* his poteen might have been, that which he now placed before them was good. He laid the bottle on a little deal table with cross legs, and along with it a small drinking glass fixed in a bit of flat circular wood, as a substitute for the original bottom, which had been broken. They now entered upon the point in question, without further delay.

"Come, Tim," said Coogan, "you're the ouldest man, and must spake first."

"Throth, man," replied Dolan, "beggin' your pardon, I'll dhrink first—healths apiece, your sowl ; success boys—glory to ourselves, and confusion to the Scanlan boys, any way."

"And maybe," observed Connell, "'tis we that didn't lick them well in the last fair—they're not able to meet the Findramore birds even on their own walk."

"Well, boys," said Delany, "about the mather ? Our childhre will grow up like *bullockeens*† widout knowing a hap'orth ; and larning, you see, is a burdyen that's asy carried."

"Ay," observed O'Neil, "as Solvester Maguire, the poet, used to say—

' Labour for larnin' before you grow ould,
For larnin' is better nor riches or gould ;
Riches an' gould they may vanquish away,
But larnin' alone it will never decay.'

* This means a treacherous person who cannot be depended on.
† Bullockeens—little bullocks.



The "Arrangement"

By J. H. R. H. H. H.

"Success, Owen! Why, you might put down the pot and warm an air to it," said Murphy.

"Well, boys, are we all safe?" asked Traynor.

"Safe!" said old Dolan. "Arrah, what are you talkin' about? Sure 'tisn't of that same spalpeen of a gauger that we'd be afraid!"

During this observation, young Dolan pressed Traynor's foot under the table, and they both went out for about five minutes.

"Father," said the son, when he and Traynor re-entered the room, "you're a wanting home."

"Who wants me, Larry, avick?" says the father.

The son immediately whispered him for a moment, when the old man instantly rose, got his hat, and after drinking another bumper of the po-teen, departed.

"'Twas hardly worth while," said Delany; "the ould fellow is nettled to the back-bone, an' would never show the *garvan-bans* at any rate, even if he knew all about it."

"Bad end to the syllable I'd let the same ould cock hear," said the son; "the divil thrust any man that didn't *switch the primer** for it, though he is my father; but now, boys, that the coast's clear, and all's safe—where will we get a schoolmaster? Mat Kavanagh won't budge from the Seanlan boys, even if we war to put our hands undher his feet: and small blame to him—sure, you would not expect him to go against his own friends?"

"Faith, the gorseons is in a bad state," said Murphy; "but, boys, where will we get a man that's *up*? Why, I know 'tis betther to have anybody nor be without one; but we might kill two birds wid one stone—if we could get a mather that would carry 'Articles,'† an' swear in the boys, from time to time—an' between ourselves, if there's any danger of the hemp, we may as well lay it upon strange shoulders."

"Ay, but since Corrigan swung for the Aagiat," replied Delany, "they're a little modest in havin' act or part wid us; but the best plan is to get an advertisement wrote out, an' have it posted on the chapel door."

This hint was debated with much earnestness; but as they were really anxious to have a master—in the first place, for the simple purpose of educating their children; and in the next, for filling the situation of director and regulator of their illegal Ribbon meetings—they determined on penning an advertisement, according to the suggestion of Delany. After drinking another bottle, and amusing themselves with some further chat, one of the Dolans undertook to draw up the advertisement, which ran as follows:—

"ADVARTAAISEMENT."

"Notes to Schoolmasters, and to all others whom it may concern.

"WANTED,

"For the nabourhood and the vircinity of the Townland of Findramore,

* Take an oath.

† A copy of the Whitebov oath and regulations.

in the Parish of Aughindrum, in the Barony of Lisnamoghry, County of Sligo, Province of Connaught, Ireland.

“ TO SCHOOLMASTERS.

“ Take Notes—That any Schoolmaster who understands Spellin’ grammatically—Readin’ and Writin’, in the raal way, accordin’ to the Dixonary—Arithmatick, that is to say, the five common rules, namely, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division—and addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, of Dives’s denominations. Also reduction up and down—cross multiplication of coin—the Rule of Three Direck—the Rule of Three in verse—the double Rule of Three—Frackshins taught according to the vulgar and decimatin’ method; and must be well practised to tache the Findramore boys how to manage the *Scuffle*.*

“ N.B. He must be well grounded in *that*. Practis, Discount, and *Rebatin’*. N.B. Must be well grounded in *that* also.

“ Tret and Tare—Fellowship—Allegation—Barther—Rates per Scent—Intherest—Exchange—Prophet in Loss—the Square Root—the Kibe Root—Hippothenus—Arithmatical and Jommetrical Purgation—Compound Intherest—Loggerheadism—Questions for Exercise, and the Conendix to Aligbbra. He must also know Jommithry accordin’ to Grunther’s scale—the Castigation of the Klipsticks—Surveying, and the use of the Jacob-staff.

“ N.B. Would get a good dale of Surveyin’ to do in the vircinity of Findramore, particularly in *Con-acre time*. If he know the use of the globe, it would be an accusation. He must also understand the Three Sets of Book-keeping, by single and double entry, particularly Loftus & Company of Paris, their Account of Cash and Company. And above all things, he must know how to tache the *Sarvin’ of Mass in Latin*, and be able to read Doctor Gallaher’s Irish Sarmints, and explain Kolumkill’s and Pasterini’s Prophecies.

“ N.B. If he understands *Cudgel-fencin’*, it would be an accusation also—but mustn’t tache us wid a staff that bends in the middle, bekase it breaks one’s head across the guard. Any schoolmaster capacious and collified to instruct in the above-mentioned branches, would get a good school in the townland Findramore and its vircinity, be well fed, an’ get the hoith o’ good livin’ among the farmers, an’ would be ped—

“ For Book-keepin’, the three sets, *a ginny and half*.

“ For Gommethry, &c., *half a ginny a quarther*.

“ Arithmatic, *aight and three-hapuns*.

“ Readin’, Writin’, &c., *six Hogs*.

“ *Given under our hands, this 37th day of June, 18004.*

“ LARRY DOLAN,

“ DICK DOLAN, his \times mark.

“ JEM COOGAN, his \times mark.

“ BRINE MURPHEY,

“ PADDY DELANY, his \times mark.

“ JACK TRAYNOR,

“ ANDY CONNELL,

“ OWEN ROE O’NEIL, his \times mark.”

* The *Scuffle* was an exercise in fractions, illustrated by a quarrel between the first four letters of the alphabet, who went to loggerheads about a sugar-plum. A, for instance, seized upon three-fourths of it; but B snapped two-thirds of what he had got, and put it into his hat;

"N.B. *By making airily application to any of the undher-mentioned, he will hear of further particklers*; and if they find that he will shoot them, he may expect the best o' thratement, an' be well fed among the farmers.*

"N.B. Would get also a good *Night-school* among the vicinity."

Having penned the above advertisement, it was carefully posted early the next morning on the chapel-doors, with an expectation on the part of the patrons that it would not be wholly fruitless. The next week, however, passed without an application—the second also—and the third produced the same result; nor was there the slightest prospect of a schoolmaster being blown by any wind to the lovers of learning at Findramore. In the meantime, the Ballyscanlan boys took care to keep up the ill-natured prejudice which had been circulated concerning the fatality that uniformly attended such schoolmasters as settled there; and when this came to the ears of the Findramore folk, it was once more resolved that the advertisement should be again put up, with a clause containing an explanation on that point. The clause ran as follows:

"N.B.—The two last masters that was hanged out of Findramore, that is, Mickey Corrigan, who was hanged for killing the Aagent, and Jem Garraghty, that died of a declension—Jem died in quensequence of ill-health, and Mickey was hanged contrary to his own wishes: so that it wasn't either of their faults—as witness our hands this 20th of July.

"DICK DOLAN, his \bowtie mark."

This explanation, however, was as fruitless as the original advertisement; and week after week passed over without an offer from a single candidate. The "vicinity" of Findramore and its "nabourhood" seemed devoted to ignorance; and nothing remained, except another effort at procuring a master by some more ingenious contrivance.

Debate after debate was consequently held in Barney Brady's; and, until a fresh suggestion was made by Delany, the prospect seemed as bad as ever. Delany, at length, fell upon a new plan; and it must be confessed, that it was marked in a peculiar manner by a spirit of great originality and enterprise, it being nothing less than a proposal to carry off, by force or stratagem, Mat Kavanagh, who was at that time fixed in the throne of literature among the Ballyscanlan boys, quite unconscious,

C then knocked off his hat, and as worthy Mr. Gough says, "to work they went." After kicking and cuffing each other in prime style, each now losing and again gaining alternately, the question is wound up by requiring the pupil to ascertain what quantity of the sugar-plum each had at the close.

* Nothing can more decidedly prove the singular and extraordinary thirst for education and general knowledge which characterises the Irish people, than the shifts to which they have often gone in order to gain even a limited portion of instruction. Of this the Irish Night School is a complete illustration. The Night School was always opened either for those of early age, who from their poverty were forced to earn *something* for their own support during the day; or to assist their parents; or for grown young men who had never had an opportunity of acquiring education in their youth, but who now devoted a couple of hours during a winter's night, when they could do nothing else, to the acquisition of reading and writing, and sometimes of accounts. I know not how it was, but the Night School boys, although often thrown into the way of temptation, always conducted themselves with singular propriety. Indeed, the fact, is, after all, pretty easily accounted for—inasmuch as none but the steadiest, most sensible, and best conducted young men ever attended it.

of the honourable translation to the neighbourhood of Findramore which was intended for him. The project, when broached, was certainly a startling one, and drove most of them to a pause, before they were sufficiently collected to give an opinion on its merits.

"Nothin', boys, is asier," said Delany. "There 's to be a pattrern in Ballymagowan, on next Saturday—an' that's jist half way betune ourselves and the 'Scanlan boys. Let us musther, an' go there, any how. We can keep an eye on Mat widout much trouble, an' when opportunity sarves, nick him at wanst, an' off wid him clane."

"But," said Traynor, "what would we do wid him when he'd be here? Wouldn't he *cut an' run* the first opportunity?"

"How can he, ye omadhawn, if we put a *manwill** in our pocket, an' sware him? But we'll butther him up when he's among us; or, be me sowks, if it goes to that, force him either to settle wid ourselves, or to make himself scarce in the counthry entirely."

"Divil a much force it'll take to keep him, I'm thinkin'," observed Murphy. "He'll have three times a betther school here; and if he wanst settled, I'll engage he would take to it kindly."

"See here, boys," says Dick Dolan, in a whisper, "if that bloody villain, Brady, isn't afther standin' this quarter of an hour, strivin' to hear what we 're about; but it's well we didn't bring up anything consarnin' the other business; didn't I tell yees the desate was in 'im? Look at his shadow on the wall forninst us."

"Hould yer tongues, boys," said Traynor; "jist keep never mindin', and, be me sowks, I'll make him sup sorrow for that thrick."

"You had betther neither make nor meddle wid him," observed Delany; "jist put him out o' that—but don't rise yer hand to him, or he'll sarve you as he did Jem Flanagan: put ye three or four months in the *Stone Jug* †."

Traynor, however, had gone out while he was speaking, and in a few minutes dragged in Brady, whom he caught in the very act of eaves-dropping.

"Jist come in, Brady," said Traynor, as he dragged him along; "walk in, man alive; sure, and sich an honest man as you are needn't be afeard of lookin' his friends in the face! Ho!—an' be my sowl, is it a spy we've got? and, I suppose, would be an informer too, if he had heard anything to tell!"

"What's the manin' of this, boys?" exclaimed the others, feigning ignorance. "Let the honest man go, Traynor. What do ye hawl him that way for, ye gallis pet?"

"Honest!" replied Traynor; "how very honest he is, the desavin' villain, to be standin' at the windy there, wantin' to overhear the little harmless talk we had."

"Come, Traynor," said Brady, seizing him in his turn by the neck, "take your hands off of me, or, bad fate to me, but I'll lave ye a mark."

Traynor, in his turn, had his hand twisted in Brady's cravat, which

* Manual, a Roman Catholic prayer-book, generally pronounced as above.

† A short paraphrase for Gaol.

he drew tightly about his neck, until the other got nearly black in the face.

"Let me go, you villain!" exclaimed Brady, "or, by this blessed night that 's in it, it 'll be worse for you."

"Villain! is it?" replied Traynor, making a blow at him, whilst Brady snatched at a penknife, which one of the others had placed on the table, after picking the tobacco out of his pipe—intending either to stab Traynor, or to cut the knot of the cravat by which he was held. The others, however, interfered, and prevented further mischief.

"Brady," said Traynor, "you 'll rue this night, if ever a man did, you tracherous informin' villain. What an honest spy we have among us!—and a short course to you!"

"O, hould yer tongue, Traynor!" replied Brady: "I believe it's best known who is both the spy and the informer. The divil a pint of poteen ever you 'll run in this parish, until you clear yourself of bringing the gauger on the Traceys, becase they tuck Mick M'Kew, in preference to yourself, to run it for them."

Traynor made another attempt to strike him, but was prevented. The rest now interfered; and, in the course of an hour or so, an adjustment took place.

Brady took up the tongs, and swore "by that blessed iron," that he neither heard, nor intended to hear, anything they said; and this exclamation was followed by a fresh bottle at his own expense.

"You omadhawn," said he to Traynor, "I was only puttin' up a dozen o' bottles into the tatch of the house, when you thought I was listenin';" and, as a proof of the truth of this, he brought them out, and showed them some bottles of poteen, neatly covered up under the thatch.

Before their separation they finally planned the abduction of Kavanagh from the Patron, on the Saturday following, and after drinking another round went home to their respective dwellings.

In this speculation, however, they experienced a fresh disappointment; for, ere Saturday arrived, whether in consequence of secret intimation of their intention from Brady, or some friend, or in compliance with the offer of a better situation, the fact was, that Mat Kavanagh had removed to another school, distant about eighteen miles from Findramore. But they were not to be outdone; a new plan was laid, and in the course of the next week a dozen of the most enterprising and intrepid of the "boys," mounted each upon a good horse, went to Mat's new residence for the express purpose of securing him.

Perhaps our readers may scarcely believe that a love of learning was so strong among the inhabitants of Findramore as to occasion their taking such remarkable steps for establishing a schoolmaster among them; but the country was densely inhabited, the rising population exceedingly numerous, and the outcry for a schoolmaster amongst the parents of the children loud and importunate.

The fact, therefore, was, that a very strong motive stimulated the inhabitants of Findramore in their efforts to procure a master. The old and middle-aged heads of families were actuated by a simple wish, inseparable from Irishmen, to have their children educated; and the young men, by a

determination to have a properly qualified person to conduct their Night Schools, and improve them in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The circumstance I am now relating is one which actually took place : and any man acquainted with the remote parts of Ireland, may have often seen bloody and obstinate quarrels among the peasantry, in vindicating a priority of claim to the local residence of a schoolmaster among them. I could, within my own experience, relate two or three instances of this nature.

It was one Saturday night, in the latter end of the month of May, that a dozen Findramore "boys," as they were called, set out upon this most singular of all literary speculations, resolved, at whatever risk, to secure the person and effect the permanent bodily presence among them of the Redoubtable Mat Kavanagh. Each man was mounted on a horse, and one of them brought a spare steed for the accommodation of the schoolmaster. The caparison of this horse was somewhat remarkable : it consisted of a wooden straddle, such as is used by the peasantry for carrying wicker paniers or creels, which are hung upon two wooden pins, that stand up out of its sides. Underneath was a straw mat, to prevent the horse's back from being stripped by it. On one side of this hung a large creel, and on the other a strong sack, tied round a stone merely of sufficient weight to balance the empty creel. The night was warm and clear, the moon and stars all threw their mellow light from a serene, unclouded sky, and the repose of nature in the short nights of this delightful season, resembles that of a young virgin of sixteen—still, light, and glowing. Their way, for the most part of their journey, lay through a solitary mountain-road ; and, as they did not undertake the enterprize without a good stock of poteen, their light-hearted songs and choruses awoke the echoes that slept in the mountain glens as they went along. The adventure, it is true, had as much of frolic as of seriousness in it ; and merely as the means of a day's fun for the boys, it was the more eagerly entered into.

It was about midnight when they left home, and as they did not wish to arrive at the village to which they were bound, until the morning should be rather advanced, the journey was as slowly performed as possible. Every remarkable object on the way was noticed, and its history, if any particular association was connected with it, minutely detailed, whenever it happened to be known. When the sun rose, many beautiful green spots and hawthorn valleys excited, even from these unpolished and illiterate peasants, warm bursts of admiration at their fragrance and beauty. In some places, the dark flowery heath clothed the mountains to the tops, from which the grey mists, lit by a flood of light, and breaking into masses before the morning breeze, began to descend into the valleys beneath them ; whilst the voice of the grouse, the bleating of sheep and lambs, the pee-weet of the wheeling lap-wing, and the song of the lark, threw life and animation over the previous stillness of the country. Sometimes a shallow river would cross the road, winding off into a valley that was overhung, on one side, by rugged precipices clothed with luxuriant heath and wild ash ; whilst, on the other, it was skirted by a long sweep of greensward, skimmed by the twittering swallow, over which lay scattered

numbers of sheep, cows, brood mares, and colts—many of them rising and stretching themselves, ere they resumed their pasture, leaving the spots on which they lay of a deeper green. Occasionally, too, a sly-looking fox might be seen lurking about a solitary lamb, or brushing over the hills with a fat goose upon his back, retreating to his den among the inaccessible rocks, after having plundered some unsuspecting farmer.

As they advanced into the skirts of the cultivated country, they met many other beautiful spots of scenery among the upland, considerable portions of which, particularly in long sloping valleys, that faced the morning sun, were covered with hazel and brushwood, where the unceasing and simple notes of the cuckoo were incessantly plied, mingled with the more mellow and varied notes of the thrush and blackbird. Sometimes, the bright summer waterfall seemed, in the rays of the sun, like a column of light, and the springs that issued from the sides of the more distant and lofty mountains shone with a steady, dazzling brightness, on which the eye could scarcely rest. The morning, indeed, was beautiful, the fields in bloom, and every thing cheerful. As the sun rose in the heavens, nature began gradually to awaken into life and happiness; nor was the natural grandeur of a Sabbath summer morning among these piles of magnificent mountains—nor its heartfelt, but more artificial beauty in the cultivated country, lost, even upon the unphilosophical “boys” of Findramore: so true is it, that such exquisite appearances of nature will force enjoyment upon the most uncultivated heart.

When they had arrived within two miles of the little town in which Mat Kavanagh was fixed, they turned off into a deep glen, a little to the left; and, after having seated themselves under a white-thorn which grew on the banks of a rivulet, they began to devise the best immediate measures to be taken.

“Boys,” said Tim Dolan, “how will we manage now with this thief of a schoolmaster, at all? Come, Jack Traynor, you that’s up to still-house work—escapin’ and carryin’ away stills from gaugers, the bloody villains! out wid yer *spoke*, till we hear your opinion.”

“Do ye think, boys,” said Andy Connell, “that we could flatter him to come by fair mains?”

“Flatther him!” said Traynor; “and, by my sowl, if we flatther him at all, it must be by the hair of the head. No, no; let us bring him first whether he will or not, an’ ax his consent afterwards!”

“I’ll tell you what it is, boys,” continued Connell, “I’ll hould a wager, if you lave him to me, I’ll bring him wid his own consent.”

“No, nor sorra that you’ll do, nor could do,” replied Traynor; “for, along wid every thing else, he thinks he’s not jist doated on by the Findramore people, being one of the Ballyscanlan tribe.—No, no; let two of us go to his place, and purtind that we have other business in the fair of Clansallagh on Monday next, and ax him in to dhrink, for he’ll not refuse that, any how; then, when he’s half tippy, ax him to convoy us this far; we’ll then meet you here, an’ tell him some palaver or other—sit down again where we are now, and, after making him dead dhrunk, hoise a big stone in the creel, and Mat in the sack, on the other side, wid his head out, and off wid him; and he will know neither act nor part about it, till we’re at Findramore.”

Having approved of this project, they pulled out each a substantial complement of stout oaten bread, which served, along with the whisky, for breakfast. The two persons pitched on for decoying Mat were Dolan and Traynor, who accordingly set out, full of glee at the singularity and drollness of their undertaking. It is unnecessary to detail the ingenuity with which they went about it, because, in consequence of Kavanagh's love of drink, very little ingenuity was necessary. One circumstance, however, came to light, which gave them much encouragement, and that was a discovery that Mat by no means relished his situation.

In the meantime, those who staid behind in the glen felt their patience begin to flag a little, because of the delay made by the others, who had promised, if possible, to have the schoolmaster in the glen before two o'clock. But the fact was, that Mat, who was far less deficient in hospitality than in learning, brought them into his house, and not only treated them to plenty of whisky, but made the wife prepare a dinner, for which he detained them, swearing, that except they stopped to partake of it, he would not convoy them to the place appointed. Evening was, therefore, tolerably far advanced, when they made their appearance at the glen, in a very equivocal state of sobriety—Mat being by far the steadiest of the three, but still considerably the worse for what he had taken. He was now welcomed by a general huzza; and on his expressing surprise at their appearance, they pointed to their horses, telling him that they were bound for the fair of Clansallagh, for the purpose of selling them. This was the more probable, as, when a fair occurs in Ireland, it is usual for cattle-dealers, particularly horse-jockeys, to effect sales, and "show" their horses on the evening before.

Mat now sat down, and was vigorously plied with strong poteen—songs were sung, stories told, and every device resorted to that was calculated to draw out and heighten his sense of enjoyment; nor were their efforts without success; for, in the course of a short time, Mat was free from all earthly care, being incapable of either speaking or standing.

"Now, boys," said Dolan, "let us do the thing clane an' dacent. Let you, Jem Coogan, Brian Murphy, Paddy Delany, and Andy Connell, go back, and tell the wife and two childher a cock-and-a-bull story about Mat—say that he is coming to Findramore for good and all, and that'll be thruth, you know; and that he ordhered yez to bring her and them afther him; and we can come back for the furniture to-morrow."

A word was enough—they immediately set off; and the others, not wishing that Mat's wife should witness the mode of his conveyance, proceeded home, for it was now dusk. The plan succeeded admirably; and in a short time the wife and children, mounted behind the "boys" on the horses, were on the way after them to Findramore.

The reader is already aware of the plan they had adopted for translating Mat; but, as it was extremely original, I will explain it somewhat more fully. The moment the schoolmaster was intoxicated to the necessary point—that is to say, totally helpless and insensible—they opened the sack and put him in, heels foremost, tying it in such a way about his neck as might prevent his head from getting into it: thus avoiding the danger of suffocation. The sack, with Mat at full length in it, was then

fixed to the pin of the straddle, so that he was in an erect posture during the whole journey. A reel was then hung at the other side, in which was placed a large stone, of sufficient weight to preserve an equilibrium; and, to prevent any accident, a droll fellow sat astride behind the straddle, amusing himself and the rest by breaking jokes upon the novelty of Mat's situation.

"Well, Mat, *ma bouchal*, how duv ye like your sivation? I believe, for all your larnin', the Findramore boys have *sacked* you at last!"

"Ay," exclaimed another, "he is sacked at last, in spite of his Matthew-maticks."

"An', be my sowks," observed Traynor, "he'd be a long time goin' up a Maypowl in the state he's in—his own snail would bate him.

"Yes," said another; "but he deserves credit for travellin' from Clansallagh to Findramore, widout layin' a foot to the ground—

" 'Wan day wid Captain Whisky I wrestled a fall,
But faith I was no match for the captain at all—
But faith I was no match for the captain at all,
Though the landlady's measures they were damnable small.
Tooral, looral, looral looral lide.'

Whoo—hurroo! my darlings—success to the Findramore boys! Hurroo—hurroo—the Findramore boys for ever!"

"Boys, did ever ye hear the song Mat made on Nod Mullen's fight wid Jemmy Connor's gander? Well here is part of it, to the tune of 'Brian O'Lynn'—

" 'As Ned and the gander wor basting each other,
I hard a loud cry from the grey goose his mother;
I ran to assist him, wid very great speed,
But before I arrived the poor gander did bleed.

" 'Alas!' says the gander, 'I'm very ill-treated,
For traicherous Mullen has me fairly defated;
Bud had you been here for to show me fair play,
I could leather his *puokan* around the lee bray.'

"Bravo! Mat,* addressing the insensible schoolmaster—"success, poet. Hurroo for the Findramore boys! the Bridge boys for ever!"

They then commenced, in a tone of mock gravity, to lecture him upon his future duties—detailing the advantages of his situation, and the comforts he would enjoy among them—although they might as well have addressed themselves to the stone on the other side. In this manner they got along, amusing themselves at Mat's expense, and highly elated at the success of their undertaking. About three o'clock in the morning they reached the top of the little hill above the village, when, on looking back along the level stretch of road which I have already described, they noticed their companions, with Mat's wife and children, moving briskly after them. A general huzza now took place, which, in a few minutes, was answered by two or three dozen of the young folks, who were assembled in Barny Brady's, waiting for their arrival. The scene now became quite animated—cheer after cheer succeeded—jokes, laughter, and rustic

* This alludes to a question in Gough's Arithmetic, which is considered difficult by hedge schoolmasters.

wit, pointed by the spirit of Brady's poteen, flew briskly about. When Mat was unsacked, several of them came up, and shaking him cordially by the hand, welcomed him among them. To the kindness of this reception, however, Mat was wholly insensible, having been for the greater part of the journey in a profound sleep. The boys now slipped the loop of the sack off the straddle-pin; and, carrying Mat into a farmer's house, they deposited him in a settle-bed, where he slept, unconscious of the journey he had performed, until breakfast-time on the next morning. In the mean time, the wife and children were taken care of by Mrs. Connell, who provided them with a bed, and every other comfort which they could require.

The next morning, when Mat awoke, his first call was for a drink. I should have here observed, that Mrs. Kavanagh had been sent for by the good woman in whose house Mat had slept, that they might all breakfast and have a drop together, for they had already succeeded in reconciling *her* to the change.

"Wather!" said Mat—"a drink of wather, if it's to be had for love or money, or I'll split wid druth—I'm all in a state of conflagration; and my head—by the sowl of Newton, the inventor of fluxions, but my head is a complete illucidation of the centrifugal motion, so it is. Tundher-an'-turf! is there no wather to be had? Nancy, I say, for God's sake, quicken yourself wid the hydraulics, or the best mathematician in Ireland's gone to the abode of Euclid and Pythagoras, that first invented the multiplication table."

On cooling his burning blood with the "hydraulics," he again lay down with the intention of composing himself for another sleep; but his eye having noticed the novelty of his situation, he once more called Nancy.

"Nancy, avourneen," he inquired, "will you be afther resolving me one single proposition—Where am I at the present spaking? Is it in the *Siminary* at home, Nancy?"

Nancy, in the mean time, had been desired to answer in the affirmative, hoping that if his mind was made easy on that point, he might refresh himself by another hour or two's sleep, as he appeared to be not at all free from the effects of his previous intoxication.

"Why, Mat, jewel, where else would you be, a lannah, but at home? Sure isn't here Jack, an' Biddy, an' myself, Mat, agra, along wid me. Your head isn't well, but all you want is a good rousin' sleep."

"Very well, Nancy; very well, that's enough—quite satisfactory—*quod erat demonstrandum*. May all kinds of bad luck rest upon the Findramore boys, any way! The unlucky vagabonds—I'm the *third* they've done up. Nancy, off wid ye, like quicksilver, for the priest."

"The priest! Why, Mat, jewel, what puts that in your head? Sure, there's nothing wrong wid ye, only the sup o' drink you tuck yestherday."

"Go, woman," said Mat; "did you ever know me to make a wrong calculation? I tell you I'm *non compos mentis* from head to heel. Head! by my sowl, Nancy, it'll soon be a *caput mortuum* wid me—I'm far gone in a disease they call an optical delusion—the devil a thing less it is—me bein' in my own place, an' to think I'm lyin' in a settle bed; that there is a large dresser, covered wid pewter dishes and plates; and, to

crown all, the door on the wrong side of the house. Off wid ye, an' tell his Reverence that I want to be anointed, and to die in pace and charity wid all men. May the most especial kind of bad luck light down upon you, Findramore, and all that's in you, both man and baste—you have given *me* my gruel along wid the rest; but, thank God, you won't hang me, any how! Off, Nancy, for the priest, till I die like a Christhan, in pace and forgiveness wid the world;—all kinds of hard fortune to them! Make haste, woman, if you expect me to die like a Christhan. If they had let me alone till I'd publish to the world my Treatise upon Conic Sections—but to be cut off on my march to fame! another draught of the hydraulics, Nancy, an' then for the priest——But see, bring Father Connell, the curate, for he understands something about Matthew-maticks; an' never heed Father Roger, for divil a thing he knows about them, not even the difference between a right line and a curve—in the page of history, to his everlasting disgrace, be the same recorded!"

"Mat," replied Nancy, scarcely preserving her gravity, "keep yourself from talkin', an' fall asleep, then you'll be well enough."

"Is there e'er a sup at all in the house? said Mat;" "if there is, let me get it; for there's an ould proverb, though it's a most unmathematical axiom as ever was invinted—'try a hair of the same dog that bit you;' give me a glass, Nancy, an' you can go for Father Connell after. Oh, by the sowl of Isaac, that invented fluxions, what's this for?"

A general burst of laughter followed this demand and ejaculation; and Mat sat up once more in the settle, and examined the place with keener scrutiny. Nancy herself laughed heartily; and, as she handed him the full glass, entered into an explanation of the circumstances attending his translation.

Mat, at all times rather of a pliant disposition, felt rejoiced on finding that he was still *compos mentis*; and on hearing what took place, he could not help entering into the humour of the enterprise, at which he laughed as heartily as any of them.

"Mat," said the farmer, and half a dozen of the neighbours, "you're a happy man; there's a hundred of the boys have a school-house half built for you this same blessed sunshiny mornin,' while you're lying at aise in your bed."

"By the sowl of Newton, that invented fluxions!" replied Mat, "but I'll take revenge for the disgrace you put upon my profession, by stringing up a schoolmaster among you, and I'll hang you all! It's death to steal a four-footed animal; but what do you desarve for stealin' a Christian baste, a two-legged schoolmaster without feathers, eighteen miles, and he not to know it?"

In the course of a short time Mat was dressed, and having found benefit from the "hair of the dog that bit him," he tried another glass, which strung his nerves, or, as he himself expressed it—"they've got the rale mathematical tinsion agin." What the farmer said, however, about the school-house had been true. Early that morning all the growing and grown young men of Findramore and its "virginity" had assembled, selected a suitable spot, and, with merry hearts, were then busily engaged in erecting a school-house for their general accommodation.

The manner of building hedge school-houses being rather curious, I will describe it. The usual spot selected for their erection is a ditch on the road-side, in some situation where there will be as little damp as possible. From such a spot an excavation is made equal to the size of the building, so that, when this is scooped out, the back side-wall and the two gables are already formed, the banks being dug perpendicularly. The front side-wall, with a window in each side of the door, is then built of clay or green sods laid along in rows; the gables are also topped with sods, and, perhaps, a row or two laid upon the back side-wall, if it should be considered too low. Having got the erection of Mat's house thus far, they procured a scraw-spade, and repaired with a couple of dozen of cars to the next bog, from which they cut the light heathy surface in strips the length of the roof. A scraw-spade is an instrument resembling the letter T, with an iron plate at the lower end, considerably bent, and well adapted to the purpose for which it is intended. Whilst one party cut the scraws, another bound the *couples* and *bauks*,* and a third cut as many green branches as were sufficient to wattle it. The couples, being bound, were raised—the ribs laid on—then the wattles, and afterwards the scraws.

Whilst these successive processes went forward, many others had been engaged all the morning cutting rushes; and the scraws were no sooner laid on, than half a dozen thatchers mounted the roof, and long before the evening was closed, a school-house, capable of holding near two hundred children, was finished. But among the peasantry no new house is ever put up without a hearth-warming, and a dance. Accordingly the clay floor was paired—a fiddler procured—Barney Brady and his stock of poteen sent for; the young women of the village and surrounding neighbourhood attended in their best finery; dancing commenced—and it was four o'clock the next morning when the merry-makers departed, leaving Mat a new home and a hard floor, ready for the reception of his scholars.

Business now commenced. At nine o'clock the next day Mat's furniture was settled in a small cabin, given to him at a cheap rate by one of the neighbouring farmers; for, whilst the school-house was being built, two men, with horses and cars, had gone to Clansallagh, accompanied by Nancy, and removed the furniture, such as it was, to their new residence. Nor was Mat, upon the whole, displeased at what had happened; he was now fixed in a flourishing country—fertile and well cultivated; nay, the bright landscape which his school-house commanded was sufficient in itself to reconcile him to his situation. The inhabitants were in comparatively good circumstances; many of them wealthy, respectable farmers, and capable of remunerating him very decently for his literary labours; and what was equally flattering, there was a certainty of his having a numerous and well-attended school, in a neighbourhood with whose inhabitants he was acquainted.

Honest, kind-hearted Paddy!—pity that you should ever feel distress or hunger!—pity that you should be compelled to seek, in another land,

* The couples are shaped like the letter A, and sustain the roof; the bauks, or rafters, cross them from one side to another like the line inside the letter.

the hard-earned pittance by which you keep the humble cabin over the head of your chaste wife and naked children! Alas! what noble materials for composing a national character, of which humanity might be justly proud, do the lower orders of the Irish possess, if raised and cultivated by an enlightened education! Pardon me, gentle reader, for this momentary ebullition; I grant I am a little dark now. I assure you, however, the tear of enthusiastic admiration is warm on my eyelids, when I remember the flitches of bacon, the sacks of potatoes, the bags of meal, the *miscavens* of butter, and the dishes of eggs—not omitting crate after crate of turf, which came in such rapid succession to Mat Kavanagh, during the first week on which he opened his school. Ay, and many a bottle of stout poteen, when

“ The eye of the gauger saw it not,”

was, with a sly, good-humoured wink, handed over to Mat, or Nancy, no matter which, from under the comfortable drab jock, with velvet-covered collar, erect about the honest, ruddy face of a warm, smiling farmer; or even the tattered frize of a poor labourer—anxious to secure the attention of the “mather” to his little “*Shoneen*,” whom, in the extravagance of his ambition, he destined to “wear the robes as a clergy.” Let no man say, I repeat, that the Irish are not fond of education.

In the course of a month Mat’s school was full to the door-posts, for, in fact, he had the parish to himself—many attending from a distance of three, four, and five miles. His merits, however, were believed to be great, and his character for learning stood high, though unjustly so: for a more superficial, and at the same time, a more presuming dunce never existed; but his character alone could secure him a good attendance; he, therefore, belied the unfavourable prejudices against the Findramore folk, which had gone abroad, and was a proof, in his own person, that the reason of the former schoolmasters’ miscarriage lay in the belief of their incapacity which existed among the people. But Mat was one of those showy, shallow fellows, who did not lack for assurance.

The first step a hedge schoolmaster took, on establishing himself in a school, was to write out, in his best copperplate hand, a flaming advertisement, detailing, at full length, the several branches he professed himself capable of teaching. I have seen many of these—as who that is acquainted with Ireland has not?—and, beyond all doubt, if the persons that issued them were acquainted with the various heads recapitulated, they must have been buried in the most profound obscurity, as no man but a walking Encyclopædia—an Admirable Crichton—could claim an intimacy with them, embracing, as they often did, the whole circle of human knowledge. ’Tis true, the vanity of the pedagogue had full scope in these advertisements, as there was none to bring him to an account, except some rival, who could only attack him on those practical subjects which were known to both. Independently of this, there was a good-natured collusion between them on those points which were beyond their knowledge, inasmuch as they were not practical but speculative, and by no means involved their character or personal interests. On the next Sunday, therefore, after Mat’s establishment at Findramore, you

might see a circle of the peasantry assembled at the chapel door, perusing, with suitable reverence and admiration on their faces, the following advertisement; or, perhaps, Mat himself, with a learned, consequential air, in the act of "expounding" it to them.

"EDUCATION.

"Mr. Matthew Kavanagh, Philomath and Professor of the Learned Languages, begs leave to inform the Inhabitants of Findramore and its vicinity, that he Lectures on the following Branches of Education, in his Seminary at the above-recited place:—

"Spelling, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, upon altogether *new* principles, hitherto undiscovered by any excepting himself, and for which he expects a *Patent* from Trinity College, Dublin; or at any rate, from Squire Johnston, Esq., who paternizes many of the pupils: Book-keeping, by single and double entry—Geometry, Trigonometry, Stereometry, Mensuration, Navigation, Guaging, Surveying, Dialling, Astronomy, Astrology, Austerity, Fluxions, Geography, ancient and modern—Maps, the Projection of the Sphere—Algebra, the Use of the Globes, Natural and Moral Philosophy, Pneumatics, Optics, Dioptrics, Catoptrics, Hydraulics, Ærostatics, Geology, Glorification, Divinity, Mythology, Medicinality, Physic, by theory only, Metaphysics practically, Chemistry, Electricity, Galvanism, Mechanics, Antiquities, Agriculture, Ventilation, Explosion, &c.

"In Classics—Grammar, Cordery, Æsop's Fables, Erasmus' Colloquies, Cornelius Nepos, Phædrus, Valerius Maximus, Justin, Ovid, Sallust, Virgil, Horace, Juvenal, Persius, Terence, Tully's Offices, Cicero, Manu-
verius Turgidus, Esculapius, Rogerius, Satanus Nigrus, Quinctilian, Livy, Thomas Aquinas, Cornelius Agrippa, and Cholera Morbus.

"Greek Grammar, Greek Testament, Lucian, Homer, Sophocles, Æschylus, Thucydides, Aristophanes, Xenophon, Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, and the Works of Alexander the Great; the manners, habits, customs, usages, and meditations of the Grecians; the Greek Digamma resolved, Prosody, Composition, both in prose and verse, and Oratory, in English, Latin, and Greek; together with various other branches of learning and scholastic profundity—*quos enumerare longum est*—along with Irish Radical, and a small taste of Hebrew upon the Masoretic text.

"MATTHEW KAVANAGH, *Philomath.*"*

* The Author, in order to satisfy his readers that the character of Matt Kavanagh as a hedge schoolmaster is not by any means overdrawn, begs to subjoin (*verbatim*) the following authentic production of one, which will sufficiently explain itself, and give an excellent notion of the mortal feuds and jealousies which subsist between persons of this class:—

"To THE PUBLIC.—Having read a printed Document, emanating, as it were, from a vile, mean, and ignorant miscreant of the name of ——— calumniating and vituperating me; it is evidently the production of a vain, supercilious, disappointed, frantic, purblind maniac of the name of ———, a bedlamite to all intents and purposes, a demon in the disguise of virtue, and a herald of hell in the paradise of innocence, possessing neither principle, honor, nor honesty; a vain and vapid creature whom nature plumed out for the annoyance of ——— and its vicinity.

It is well known and appreciated by an enlightened and discerning public, that I am as competently qualified to conduct the duties of a Schoolmaster as any Teacher in Munster. (Here I pause, stimulated by dove-eyed humility, and by the fine and exalted feelings of nature, to make a few honorable exceptions, particularly when I memorize the names and

Having posted this document upon the chapel-door, and in all the public places and cross roads of the parish, Mat considered himself as having done his duty. He now began to teach, and his school continued to increase to his heart's content, every day bringing him fresh scholars. In this manner he flourished till the beginning of winter, when those boys who, by the poverty of their parents, had been compelled to go to service

immortal fame of a Mr. ———, a Mr. ———, a Mr. ———, a Mr. ———, a Mr. ———, a Mr. ———, ———; a Mr. Matt. ———, ———; a Mr. ———, ———; and many other stars of the first magnitude, too numerous for insertion).

The notorious impostor and biped animal already alluded to, actuated by an overweening desire of notoriety, and in order to catch the applause of some one, grovelling in the morasses of insignificance and vice, like himself, leaves his native obscurity, and indulges in falsehood, calumny, and defamation. I am convinced that none of the highly respectable Teachers of ——— has had any participation in this scurrilous transaction, as I consider them to be sober, moral, exemplary, well-conducted men, possessed of excellent literary abilities; but this expatriated ruffian and abandoned profligate, being aware of the *marked and unremitting attention* which I have heretofore invariably paid to the scholars committed to my care, and the astonishing proficiency which, generally speaking, will be an accompaniment of competency, instruction, assiduity and perseverance, devised this detestable and fiendish course in order to tarnish and injure my *unsullied* character, it being generally known and justly acknowledged that I never gave utterance to an unguarded word—that I have always conducted myself as a man of inoffensive, mild, and gentle habits, of unblemished moral character, and perfectly sensible of the importance of inculcating on the young mind, moral and religious instruction, a love of decency, cleanliness, industry, honesty, and truth—that my only predominant fault, some years ago, consisted in partaking of copious libations of the 'Mountain Dew,' which I shall for ever mourn with *heartfelt compunction*.—But I return thanks to the Great God, for more than eighteen months my lips have not partaken of that infuriating beverage to which I was unfortunately attached, and my habitual propensity vanished at the sanctified and ever-memorable sign of the cross—the memento of man's lofty destination, and miraculous injunction, of the great, illustrious, and never-to-be-forgotten Apostle of Temperance. I am now a humble member of this exemplary and excellent society, which is engaged in the glorious and hallowed cause of promoting Temperance, with the zealous solicitude of parents.—I am one of these noble men, *because they are sober men*, who have triumphed over their habits, conquered their passions, and put their predominant propensities to flight; yes, kind-hearted, magnanimous, and lofty high-minded conqueror, I have to announce to you that I have gained repeated victories, and consigned to oblivion the hydra-headed monster, Intemperance; and in consequence of which, have been consigned from poverty and misery, to affluence and happiness, possessing 'ready rino,' or ample pecuniary means to make one comfortable and happy, thereby enjoying "the feast of reason and the flow of soul," *i. e.*—an honest, cozy, warm, comfortable cup of tea, to consign my drooping, sober, and cheerful spirits into the flow of soul, and philosophy of pleasure. I, therefore, do feel I had no occasion to speak a word in vindication of my conduct and character. A conspiracy in embryo, formed by a triumvirate, was brought to maturity by as experienced a calumniator as Cauty, the Hangman from Cork, was in the discharge of his functions, when in the situation of municipal officer; and the hoary-headed cadma and crack-brained Pedagogue was appointed a necessary evil vehicle for industriously circulating said maniac calumny. Why did not this base Plebeian, anterior to his giving publicity to the tartaric nausea that rankled at his gloomy heart, forward the corroding philippic, and bid defiance to my contradiction? No, no; he knew full well that with his scanty stock of English ammunition scattered over the sterile floor of his literary magazine, he could not have the effrontery, impudence, or presumption to enter the list of philosophical and scientific disputation with one who has traversed the thorny paths of literature, explored its mazy windings, and who is thoroughly and radically fortified, as being encompassed with the impenetrable shield of genuine science. This red, hot, fiery, unguarded locust, in the inanity of his mind's incomprehensibility, has not only incurred my displeasure by his satirical doggerel Lampoons, &c. but the abhorrence, animosity, and *holy indignation* of many *who move in the high circle*, as well as the inoffensive contempt of the majority of those good and useful members of society, who are engaged in the glorious and delightful task of teaching the young idea how to shoot, and forming the mind to rectitude of conduct; and whose labours are tremendous.—I speak from long and considerable experience in scholastic pursuits. I am as perfectly aware as any man of the friendly intercourse, urbanity, and social reciprocation of kindness and demeanour that ought to exist among Teachers;—and, in a word,

to the neighbouring farmers, flocked to him in numbers, quite voracious for knowledge. An addition was consequently built to the school-house, which was considerably too small; so that, as Christmas approached, it would be difficult to find a more numerous or merry establishment under the roof of a hedge school. But it is time to give an account of its interior.

that they should be like the sun and moon—*i. e.* receptacles of each other's light. But these malicious, ignorant, calous-hearted traducers finding it perfectly congenial to their usual habits, and perhaps feeling no remorse of conscience in departing from those principles which must always accompany men of education, carry into effect their scheme of wanton, atrocious, and deliberate falsehood. And accordingly, in pursuance of their infernal piece of villainy, one of them being sensible of being held in contempt and ridicule by an *enlightened public*—whose approbation alone is the true criterion by which Teachers ought to be sanctioned, countenanced, and patronised—incited, ordered, and directed, the aforesaid Lamponner—a reckless, heartless, illiterate, evil-minded ghost, yes my friends, an evil-spirit, created by the wrath of God—to pour out the rigmarele effusions of his silly and contemptible lucubrations. It is a well-known fact, that this vile calumniator is the shame, the disgrace, the opprobrium, and brand of detestation; the sacriligious and perjured outcast of society, who would cut any man's throat for one glass of the soul-destroying beverage. This accursed viper and well-known hob-goblin, labours under a complication of maladies: at one time you might see him leaving the Court-house of ———, with the awful crime of perjury depleted in capital letters on his forehead, and indelibly engraven in the recesses of his heart, considering that every tongueless object was eloquent of his woe, and at periods labouring under a semi-perspicuous, semi-opaque, gutta-serena, attended with an acute palpitation of his perieranium, and a most tormenting delirium of intellects from which he finds not the least mitigation until he consociates his optics under the influence of Morpheus. There are ties of affinity and consanguinity existing between this manufacturer of atrocious falsehoods and barefaced calumnies, and a Jack-Ass, which ties cannot be easily dissolved, the affinity or similitude is perceptible to an indifferent observer in the accent, pronunciation, modulation of the voice of the biped animal, and in the braying of the quadruped. This Jack-Ass you might also behold perambulating the streets of ———, a second Judas Iscariot—a houseless, homeless, penniless, forlorn, fugitive, like Old Nick or Beelzebub, seeking whom he might betray and injure in the public estimation, in rapacity, or in discharging a blunderbuss full of falsehood against the most pure and unimpeachable member of society! Is it not astonishing that this wretched, braying, incorrigible mendicant does not put on a more firm and unalterable resolutions of taking pattern by, and living in accordance with the laudable and exemplary habits of members of the *Literati*, the ornament of which learned body is the Rev. Dr. King, of Ennis College, a gentleman by birth, by principles, and more than all, a gentleman by education; whose mind is pregnant with inexhaustible stores of classical and mathematical lore, entertainment and knowledge; whose learning and virtues have shed a lustre on the human kind; a gentleman possessing almost superhuman talents. No, he must persevere and run in his accustomed old course of abomination, slander, iniquity, and vice.

In conclusion, to the R. C. Clergymen of ———, and the respectable portion of the laity, I return my ardent heartfelt thanks—to the former, who are the pious, active, and indefatigable instructors of the peasantry; their consolers in affliction, their resource in calamity, their preceptors and models in religion, the trustees of their interest, their visitors in sickness, and their companions on their beds of death; and from the latter I have experienced considerable gratitude in unison with all the other fine qualities inherent in their nature; while neither time nor place shall ever banish from my grateful heart, their urbanity, hospitality, munificence, and kindness to me on every occasion.

I have the honour to be their very devoted, much obliged, and grateful Servant,
JOHN O'KELLY.

The itinerant cosmopolite, to use his own phraeology, accuses me with being lame.—I reply, so was Lord Byron; and why not a Star from Dromedolohor be similarly honoured, for If God, one member has oppress'd,
He has made more perfect all the rest.

The following poetic lines are to be inserted in reply to the doggrel composition of the equivoating and hoary champion of wilful and deliberate falsehood, and a compound of knavery, deception, villainy, and dissimulation, wherever he goes:—

The reader will then be pleased to picture to himself such a house as I have already described—in a line with the hedge; the eave of the back roof within a foot of the ground behind it; a large hole exactly in the middle of the "*riggin*," as a chimney; immediately under which is an excavation in the floor, burned away by a large fire of turf, loosely heaped together. This is surrounded by a circle of urchins, sitting on

O'Kelly's my name,
I think it no shame,
Of sempiternal fame in that line,
As for my being lame,
The rest of my frame,
Is somewhat superior to thine.
These addled head swains,
Of paralyzed brains,
Who charge me with corrupting youth,
Are a perjuring pair,
In Bezebub's chair,
Stamped with disgrace and untruth.

We are obliged to omit some remarks that accompanied the following poetic effusion:—

A book to the blind signifies not a feather,
Whose look and whose mind chime both together,
Boreas, pray blow this vile rogue o'er the ferry,
For he is a disgrace and a scandal to Korry.

The writer of this, after passing the highest eulogium on the Rev. Mr. O'Kelly, P. P., Kilmichael, in speaking of him, says,

In whom, the Heavenly virtues do unite,
Serenely fair, in glowing colours bright,
The shivering mendicant's attire,
The stranger's friend, the orphan's sire,
Benevolent and mild;
The guide of youth,
The light of truth,
By all condignly styl'd.

A gentleman having applied for a transcript of this interesting document for his daughter, Mr. O'Kelly says, this transcript is given with perfect cheerfulness, at the suggestion of the amiable, accomplished, highly-gifted, original genius, Miss Margaret Brew of ———, to whom, with the most respectful deference, I take the liberty of applying the following most appropriate poetic lines:—

Kilrush, a lovely spot of Erin's Isle,
May you and your fair ones in rapture smile,
By force of genius and superior wit,
Any station in high life, the'd fit.
Raise the praise worthy, in a style unknown,
Laud her, who has great merit of her own.
Had I the talents of the bards of yore,
I would touch my harp and sing for ever more,
Of Miss Brew, unrivalled, and in her youth,
The ornament of friendship, love and truth.
That fair one, whose matchless eloquence divine,
Finds out the sacred pores of man sublime,
Tells us, a female of Kilrush doth shine.
In point of language, eloquence, and ease,
She equals the celebrated Dowes now-a-days,
A splendid poetess—how sweet her verse,
That which, without a blush, Downes might rehearse;
Her throbbing breast, the home of virtue rare,
Her bosom, warm, loving, and sincere,
A mild *fair one*, the muses only care,
Of learning, sense, true wit, and talents rare;
Endless her fame, on golden wings she'd fly,
Loud as the trumpet of the rolling sky.

the bare earth, stones, and hassocks, and exhibiting a series of speckled shins, all radiating towards the fire, like sausages on a *Poloni* dish. There they are—wedged as close as they can sit; one with half a thigh off his breeches—another with half an arm off his tattered coat—a third without breeches at all, wearing, as a substitute, a piece of his mother's old petticoat, pinned about his loins—a fourth, no coat—a fifth, with a cap on him, because he has got a scald, from having sat under the juice of fresh hung bacon—a sixth with a black eye—a seventh two rags about his heels to keep his kibes clean—an eighth crying to get home, because he has got a head-ache, though it may be as well to hint, that there is a drag-hunt to start from beside his father's in the course of the day. In this ring, with his legs stretched in a most lordly manner, sits, upon a deal chair, Mat himself, with his hat on, basking in the enjoyment of unlimited autho-

I avail myself of this opportunity, in the most humble posture, the pardon and indulgence of that nobleman of the most profound considerable talents, unbounded liberality, and genuine worth, Crofton M. Vandeleur, Esq., for the culpable omission, which I have incautiously and inadvertently made, in not prior to, and before all, tendered his honor, my warm hearty and best acknowledgements, and participating in the general joy, visible here on every countenance, occasioned by the restoration to excellent health, which his most humane, truly charitable, and illustrious beloved patroness of virtue and morality, Lady Grace T. Vandeleur, now enjoys. May they very late, when they see their children, as well as their numerous, happy and contented tenantry, flourish around them in prosperity, virtue, honour, and independence—may they then resign their temporal care, to partake of the never-ending joys, glory, and felicity of Heaven; these are the fervent wishes and ardent prayers of their ever grateful servant,

JOHN O'KELLY.

O rouse my muse and launch in praise forth,
Dwell with delight, with extacy on worth;
In these kind souls it conspicuous flows,
Their liberal hands expelling human woes.
Tell, when dire want oppressed the needy poor,
They drove the ghastly spectre from the door.
Such noble actions yield more pure content,
Than thousands squander'd or in banquets spent.

I hope, kind and extremely patient reader, you will find my piece humorous, interesting, instructive, and edifying. In delineating and drawing to life the representation of my assailant, aggressor, and barefaced calumniator. I have preferred the natural order, free, and familiar style, to the artificial order, grave, solemn, and antiquated style; and in so doing, I have had occasion to have reference to the vocal metaphor of some words. With a due circumspection of the use of their synonymy, taking care that the import and acceptation of each phrase and word should not appear frequently synonymous. Again. I have applied the whip unsparingly to his back, and have given him such a laudable castigation, as to compel him to comport himself in future with propriety and politeness; yes, it is quite obvious that I have done it, by an appropriate selection of catogramatic and concatenogramatic terms and words. I have been particularly careful to adorn it with some poetic spontaneous effusions, and although I own to you, that I have no pretensions to be an adept in poetry, as I have only moderately sipped of the Helicon Fountain; yet from my knowledge of Orthometry I can prove the correctness of it, by special and general metric analysis. In conclusion, I have not indulged in Rhetorical figures and Tropes, but have rigidly adhered to the use of figurative and literal language; finally I have used a concatenation of appropriate mellifluous epithets, logically and philosophically accurate, copious, sublime, eloquent and harmonious.

Adieu! Adieu!

Remember,

JOHN O'KELLY,

Literary Teacher,

And a native of Dromcoloher.

The author of this extempore production, is writing a Treatise on Mental Calculations, to which are appended more than three hundred scientific, ingenious, and miscellaneous questions, with their solutions.

riety. His dress consists of a black coat, considerably in want of repair, transferred to his shoulders through the means of a clothes-broker in the county-town; a white cravat, round a large stuffing, having that part which comes in contact with the chin somewhat streaked with brown—a black waistcoat, with one or two “tooth-an’-egg” metal buttons sewed on where the original had fallen off—black corduroy inexpressibles, twice dyed, and sheep’s-gray stockings. In his hand is a large, broad ruler, the emblem of his power, the woful instrument of executive justice, and the signal of terror to all within his jurisdiction. In a corner below is a pile of turf, where, on entering, every boy throws his two sods, with a *hitch* from under his left arm. He then comes up to the master, catches his forelock with finger and thumb, and bobs down his head, by way of making him a bow, and goes to his seat. Along the walls on the ground is a series of round stones, some of them capped with a straw collar or hassock, on which the boys sit; others have bosses, and many of them hobs—a light but compact kind of boggy substance found in the mountains. On these several of them sit; the greater number of them, however, have no seats whatever, but squat themselves down, without compunction, on the hard floor. Hung about, on wooden pegs driven into the walls, are the shapeless yellow “*caubeens*” of such as can boast the luxury of a hat, or caps made of goat or hare skin, the latter having the ears of the animal rising ludicrously over the temples, or cocked out at the sides, and the scut either before or behind, according to the taste or the humour of the wearer. The floor, which is only swept every Saturday, is strewed over with tops of quills, pens, pieces of broken slate, and tattered leaves of “Reading made Easy,” or fragments of old copies. In one corner is a knot engaged at “Fox and Geese,” or the “Walls of Troy” on their slates; in another, a pair of them are “fighting bottles,” which consists in striking the bottoms together, and he whose bottle breaks first, of course, loses. Behind the master is a third set, playing “heads and points”—a game of pins. Some are more industriously employed in writing their copies, which they perform seated on the ground, with their paper on a copy-board—a piece of planed deal, the size of the copy, an appendage now nearly exploded—their cheek-bones laid within half an inch of the left side of the copy, and the eye set to guide the motion of

Mental calculations for the first time are simplified, which, will prove a grand desideratum and of the greatest importance in mercantile affairs.

You will not wonder when I will ye,
 You have read some pieces from O’Kelly;
 Halt he does, but ’tis no more
 Than Lord Byron did before;
 Read his pieces and you’ll find
 There is no limping in his mind;
 Reader, give your kind subscription,
 Of you, he will give a grand discription.

Price 2s. to be paid in advance.

There are Sixty-Eight Subscribers to the forthcoming work, Gentlemen of considerable Talents, Liberality and worth;—who, with perfect cheerfulness, have evinced a most laudable disposition to foster, encourage and reward, a specimen of *Irish Manufacture and Native Talent*, in so humble a person as their extremely grateful, much obliged, and faithful servant,

JOHN O’KELLY.”

the hand across, and to regulate the straightness of the lines and the forms of the letters. Others, again, of the more grown boys, are working their sums with becoming industry. In a dark corner are a pair of urchins thumping each other, their eyes steadily fixed on the master, lest he might happen to glance in that direction. Near the master himself are the larger boys, from twenty-two to fifteen—shaggy-headed slaps, with loose-breasted shirts lying open about their bare chests; ragged colts, with white, dry, bristling beards upon them, that never knew a razor; strong stockings on their legs; heavy brogues, with broad, nail-paved soles; and breeches open at the knees. Nor is the establishment without a competent number of females. These were, for the most part, the daughters of wealthy farmers, who considered it necessary to their respectability, that they should not be altogether illiterate; such a circumstance being a considerable drawback, in the opinion of an admirer, from the character of a young woman for whom he was about to propose—a drawback, too, which was always weighty in proportion to her wealth or respectability.

Having given our readers an imperfect sketch of the interior of Mat's establishment, we will now proceed, however feebly, to represent him at work—with all the machinery of the system in full operation.

"Come, boys, rehearse—(buz, buz, buz)—I'll soon be after calling up the first spelling lesson—(buz, buz, buz)—then the mathematicians—book-keepers—Latinists, and Grecians, successfully. (Buz, buz, buz)—Silence there below!—your pens! Tim Casey, isn't this a purty hour o' the day for you to come into school at; arrah, and what kept you, Tim? Walk up wid yourself here, till we have a confabulation together; you see I love to be talking to you."

"Sir, Larry Branagan, here; he's throwing spits at me out of his pen."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"By my sowl, Larry, there's a rod in steep for you."

"Fly away, Jack—fly away, Jill; come again, Jack—"

"I had to go to Paddy Nowlan's for tobaccy, Sir, for my father." (Weeping, with his hand knowingly across his face—one eye laughing at his comrades.)—

"You lie, it wasn't."

"If you call me a liar agin, I'll give you a dig in the mug."

"It's not in your jacket."

"Isn't it?"

"Behave yourself; ha! there's the masher looking at you—ye'll get it now."—

"None at all, Tim? And she's not after sinding an excuse wid you? What's that undher your arm?"

"My Gough, Sir."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

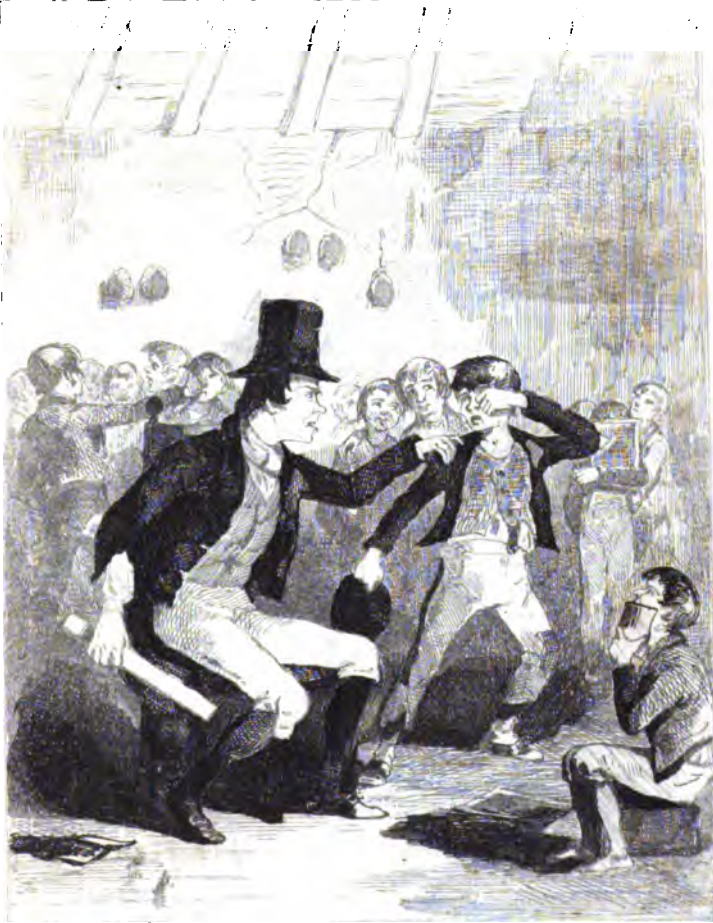
"Silence, boys. And, you blackguard Lilliputian, you, what kept you away till this?"—

"One bird pickin', two men thrashin'; one bird pickin', two men thrashin'; one bird pickin'—"

"Sir, they're stickin' pins in me, here."

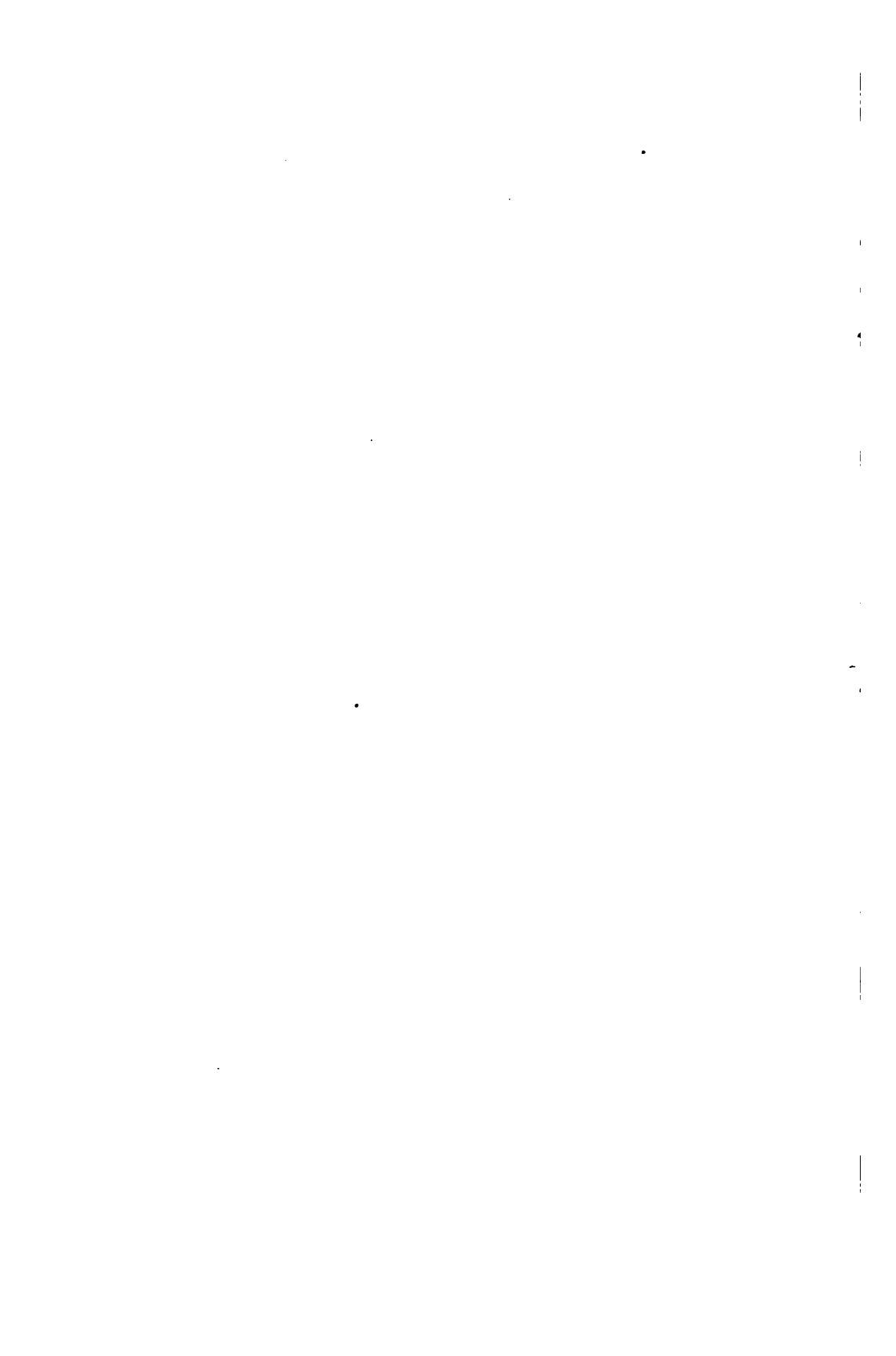
"Who is, Briney?"

"I don't know, Sir, they're all at it."



Matt Kavanagh exercising his vocation.

1850.



"Boys, I'll go down to yez."

"I can't carry him, Sir, he'd be too heavy for me: let Larry Toole do it, he's stronger nor me; any way, there, he's putting a corker pin in his mouth."*—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"Whoo-hoo-hoo-hoo—I'll never stay away agin, Sir; indeed I won't, Sir. Oh, Sir dear, pardon me this wan time; and if ever you catch me doing the like agin, I'll give you lave to welt the sowl out of me."—(Buz, buz, buz.)—

"Behave yourself, Barny Byrne."

"I'm not touching you."

"Yes, you are; didn't you make me blot my copy?"

"Ho, by the livin', I'll pay you goin' home for this."

"Hand me the taws."

"Whoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo—what'll I do, at all at all! Oh, Sir dear, Sir dear, Sir dear—hoo-hoo-hoo."

"Did she send no message, good or bad, before I lay on?"

"Oh, not a word, Sir, only that my father killed a pig yestherday, and he wants you to go up to-day at dinner time."—(Buz, buz, buz.)—

"It's time to get lave—it isn't, it is—it isn't, it is," &c.

"You lie, I say, your faction never was able to fight ours; didn't we lick all your dirty breed in Buillagh-battha fair?"

"Silence there."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"Will you meet us on Saturday, and we'll fight it out clane?"—

"Ha-ha-ha! Tim, but you got a big fright, any how: whist, ma bouchal, sure I was only jokin' you; and sorry I'd be to bate your father's son, Tim. Come over, and sit beside myself at the fire here. Get up, Micky Donoghue, you big burnt-shinn'd spalpeen you, and let the decent boy sit at the fire."

"Hullabaloo hoo-hoo-hoo—to go to give me such a welt, only for sittin' at the fire, and me brought turf wid me."—

"To-day, Tim?"

"Yes, Sir."

"At dinner time, is id?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Faith, the decent strain was always in the same family."—(Buz, buz, buz.)—

"Horns, horns, cock horns: oh, you up'd wid them, you lifted your fingers—that's a mark, now—hould your face, till I blacken you."—

"Do you call thim two sods, Jack Lanigan? why, 'tis only one long

* In the hedge schools it was usual for the unfortunate culprit about to be punished, to avail himself of all possible stratagems that were calculated to diminish his punishment. Accordingly, when put upon another boy's back to be horsed, as it was termed, he slipped a large pin, called a corker, in his mouth, and on receiving the first blow struck it into the neck of the boy who carried him. This caused the latter to jump and bounce about in such a manner, that many of the blows directed at his burthen missed their aim. It was an understood thing, however, that the boy carrying the felon should aid him in every way in his power, by yielding, moving, and shifting about, so that it was only when he seemed to abet the master that the pin was applied to him.

one broke in the middle ; but you must make it up to-morrow, Jack how is your mother's tooth ?—did she get it pulled out yet ? ”

“ No, Sir.”

“ Well, tell her to come to me, an' I'll write a charm for it, that'll cure her.—What kept you till now, Paddy Magouran ? ”

“ Couldn't come any sooner, Sir.”

“ You couldn't, Sir—and why, Sir, couldn't you come any sooner, Sir ? ”—

“ See, Sir, what Andy Nowlan done to my copy.”—(Buz, buz, buz.)—

“ Silence, I'll massacre yez, if yez don't make less noise.”—(Buz, buz, buz.)

“ I was down with Mrs. Kavanagh, Sir.”

“ You were, Paddy—an' Paddy, *ma bouchal*, what war you doing there, Paddy ? ”—

“ Masther, Sir, spake to Jem Kenny here ; he made my nose bleed.”—

“ Eh, Paddy ? ”

“ I was bringin' her a layin' hen, Sir, that my mother promised her at mass on Sunday last.”

“ Ah, Paddy, you're a game bird, yourself, wid your layin' hens ; you're as full o' mischief as an egg's full o' mate—(omnes—ha, ha, ha, ha!)—Silence, boys—what are you laughin' at ?—ha, ha, ha !—Paddy, can you spell Nebachodnazure for me ? ”

“ No, Sir.”

“ No, nor a better scholar, Paddy, could not do that, *ma bouchal* ; but *FU* spell it for you. Silence, boys—whist, all of yez, till I spell Nebachodnazure for Paddy Magouran. Listen ; and you yourself, Paddy, are one of the letthers :

“ ‘ A turf and a *clod* spells Nebachod—
A knife and a razor, spells Nebachodnazure—
Three pair of boots and five pair of shoes—
Spells Nebachodnazure, the king of the Jewa.’ ”

Now, Paddy, that's spelling Nebachodnazure by the science of Ventilation ; but you'll never go that deep, Paddy.”—

“ I want to go out, if you please, Sir.”

“ Is that the way you ax me, you vagabone ? ”

“ I want to go out, Sir,”—(pulling down the fore lock.)

“ Yes, that's something dacenter ; by the sowl of Newton, that invinted fluxions, if ever you forget to make a bow again, I'll flog the enthrials out of you—wait till the pass comes in.”

Then comes the spelling lesson.

“ Come, boys, stand up to the spelling lesson.”

“ Micky,” says one urchin, “ show me your book, till I look at *my* word. I'm fifteenth.”

“ Wait till I see my own.”

“ Why do you crush for.”

“ That's my place.”

“ No, it's not.”

“ Sir spake to——I'll tell the masther.”

"What's the matter there?"

"Sir, he won't let me into my place."

"I'm before you."

"No, you're not."

"I say, I am."

"You lie, pug-face: ha! I called you pug-face, tell now if you dare."

"Well, boys, down with your pins in the book: who's king?"

"I am, Sir."

"Who's queen?"

"Me, Sir."

"Who's prince?"

"I am prince, Sir."

"Tag rag and bob-tail, fall into your places."

"I've no pin, Sir."

"Well, down with you to the tail—now, boys." *

Having gone through the spelling task, it was Mat's custom to give out six *hard words* selected according to his judgment—as a final test; but he did not always confine himself to that. Sometimes he would put a number of syllables arbitrarily together, forming a most heterogeneous combination of articulate sounds.

"Now, boys, here's a deep word, that'll thry yez; come, Larry, spell *me-mo-man-dran-san-ti-fi-can-du-ban-dan-ti-al-i-ty*, or *mis-an-thro-pomor-phi-ta-ni-a-nus-mi-ca-li-a-tion*;—that's too hard for you, is it? Well, then, spell phthisic. Oh, that's physic you're spellin'. Now, Larry, do you know the difference between physic and phthisic?"

"No, Sir."

"Well, I'll expound it: phthisic, you see, manes—whisht, boys; will yez hould yer tongues there—phthisic, Larry, signifies—that is, phthisic—mind, it's not physic I'm expounding, but phthisic—boys, will yez stop yer noise there—signifies—but, Larry, it's so deep a word in larnin' that I should draw it out on a slate for you: and now I remimber, man alive, you're not far enough on yet to understand it: but what's physic, Larry?"

"Isn't that, Sir, what my father tuck, the day he got sick, Sir?"

"That's the very thing, Larry: it has what larned men call a medical property, and resembles little ricketty Dan Reilly there—it retrogrades. Och! och! I'm the boy that knows things—you see now how I expounded them two hard words for yez, boys—don't yez?"

"Yes, Sir," &c. &c.

"So, Larry, you haven't the larnin' for that either: but here's an 'asier one—spell me Ephabridotas (Epaphroditas)—you can't! hut! man—you're a big dunce entirely, that little shoneen Sharkey there below would *sack*. God be wid the day when I was the likes of you—it's I that was the bright gorsoon entirely—and so sign was on it, when a great larned traveller—silence, boys, till I tell yez this, [a dead silence]

* At the spelling lesson the children were obliged to put down each a pin, and he who held the first place got them all with the exception of the queen—that is the boy who held the second place, who got two; and the prince, i. e. the third, who got one. The last boy in the class was called *Bobtail*.

—from Thrinity College, all the way in Dublin, happened to meet me one day—seeing the slate and Gough, you see, undher my arm, he axes me—‘Arrah, Mat,’ says he, ‘what are you in?’ says he. ‘Faix, I’m in my breeches, for one thing,’ says I, off hand—silence, childhree, and don’t laugh so loud—(ha, ha, ha!) So he looks closer at me: ‘I see that,’ says he; ‘but what are you reading?’ ‘Nothing, at all at all,’ says I; ‘bad manners to the taste, as you may see, if you’ve your eyesight.’ ‘I think,’ says he, ‘you’ll be apt to *die* in your breeches;’ and set spurs to a fine saddle mare he rid—faith, he did so—thought me so *cute*—(omnes—ha, ha, ha!) Whisht, boys, whisht; isn’t it a terrible thing that I can’t tell yez a joke, but you split your sides laughing at it—(ha, ha, ha!)—don’t laugh so loud, Barney Casey.”—(ha, ha, ha!)

Barney.—“I want to go out, if you plase, Sir.”

“Go, avick, you’ll be a good scholar yet, Barney. Faith, Barney knows whin to laugh, any how.”

“Well, Larry, you can’t spell Ephabridotas?—thin, here’s a short weeshy one, and whoever spells it will get the pins;—spell a red rogue wid three letters. You, Micky? Dan? Jack? Natty? Alick? Andy? Pether? Jim? Tim? Pat? Rody? you? you? you? Now, boys, I’ll hould ye that my nttle Andy here, that’s only beginning the *Rational Spelling Book*, bates you all; comè here, Andy, alanna: now, boys, if he bates you, you must all bring him a little *miscoun* of butter between two kale blades, in the mornin’, for himself; here, Andy avourneen, spell red rogue wid three letthers.”

Andy.—“M, a, t—Mat.”

“No, no, avick, that’s myself, Andy; it’s red rogue, Andy—hem!—F—.”

“F, o, x—fox.”

“That’s a man, Andy. Now, boys, mind what you owe Andy in the mornin’, plase God, won’t yez?”

“Yes, Sir.” “Yes, Sir.” “Yes, Sir.” “I will, Sir.” “And I will, Sir.” “And so will I, Sir,” &c. &c. &c.

I know not whether the Commissioners of Education found the monitorial system of instruction in such of the old hedge schools as maintained an obstinate resistance to the innovations of modern plans. That Bell and Lancaster deserve much credit for applying and extending the principle (speaking without any reference to its merits) I do not hesitate to grant; but it is unquestionably true, that the principle was reduced to practice in Irish hedge schools long before either of these worthy gentlemen were in existence. I do not, indeed, at present remember, whether or not they claim it as a discovery, or simply as an adaptation of a practice which experience, in accidental cases, had found useful, and which they considered capable of more extensive benefit. I remember many instances, however, in which it was applied—and applied, in my opinion, though not as a permanent system, yet more judiciously than it is at present. I think it a mistake to suppose that silence, among a number of children in school, is conducive to the improvement either of health or intellect. That the chest and the lungs are benefited by giving full play to the voice, I think will not be disputed; and that a child is

capable of more intense study and abstraction in the din of a school-room, than in partial silence, (if I may be permitted the word,) is a fact, which I think any rational observation would establish. There is something cheering and cheerful in the noise of friendly voices about us—it is a restraint taken off the mind, and it will run the lighter for it—it produces more excitement, and puts the intellect in a better frame for study. The obligation to silence, though it may give the master more ease, imposes a new moral duty upon the child, the sense of which must necessarily weaken his application. Let the boy speak aloud, if he pleases—that is, to a certain pitch; let his blood circulate; let the natural secretions take place, and the physical effluvia be thrown off by a free exercise of voice and limbs: but do not keep him dumb and motionless as a statue—his blood and his intellect both in a state of stagnation, and his spirit below zero. Do not send him in quest of knowledge alone, but let him have cheerful companionship on his way; for, depend upon it, that the man who expects too much either in discipline or morals from a boy, is not, in my opinion, acquainted with human nature. If an urchin titter at his own joke, or that of another—if he give him a jagg of a pin under the desk, imagine not that it will do him an injury, whatever phrenologists may say concerning the organ of destructiveness. It is an exercise to the mind, and he will return to his business with greater vigour and effect. Children are not men, nor influenced by the same motives—they do not reflect, because their capacity for reflection is imperfect; so is their reason: whereas, on the contrary, their faculties for education (excepting judgment, which strengthens my argument) are in greater vigour in youth than in manhood. The general neglect of this distinction is, I am convinced, a stumbling-block in the way of youthful instruction, though it characterises all our modern systems. We should never forget that they are children; nor should we bind them by a system, whose standard is taken from the maturity of human intellect. We may bend our reason to theirs, but we cannot elevate their capacity to our own. We may produce an external appearance, sufficiently satisfactory to ourselves; but, in the mean time, it is probable that the child may be growing in hypocrisy, and settling down into the habitual practice of a fictitious character.

But another and more serious objection may be urged against the present strictness of scholastic discipline—which is, that it deprives the boy of a sense of free and independent agency. I speak this with limitations, for a master should be a monarch in his school, but by no means a tyrant; and decidedly the very worst species of tyranny is that which stretches the young mind upon the bed of too rigorous a discipline—like the despot who exacted from his subjects so many barrels of perspiration, whenever there came a long and severe frost. Do not familiarize the mind when young to the toleration of slavery, lest it prove afterwards incapable of recognising and relishing the principle of an honest and manly independence. I have known many children, on whom a rigour of discipline, affecting the mind only, (for severe corporal punishment is now almost exploded,) impressed a degree of timidity almost bordering on pusillanimity. A way, then, with the specious and long-winded argu-

ments of a false and mistaken philosophy. A child will be a child, and a boy a boy, to the conclusion of the chapter. Bell or Lancaster would not relish the pap or caudle-cup three times a day; neither would an infant on the breast feel comfortable after a gorge of ox beef. Let them, therefore, put a little of the mother's milk of human kindness and consideration into their strait-laced systems.

A hedge schoolmaster was the general scribe of the parish, to whom all who wanted letters or petitions written, uniformly applied—and these were glorious opportunities for the pompous display of pedantry—the remuneration usually consisted of a bottle of whisky.

A poor woman, for instance, informs Mat that she wishes to have a letter written to her son, who is a soldier abroad.

“An' how long is he gone, ma'am?”

“Och, thin, mather, he's from me goin' an' fifteen year; an' a comrade of his was spakin' to Jim Dwyer, an' says his ridgiment's lyin' in the Island of Budanages, somewhere in the back parts of Africa.”

“An' is it a letther or petition you'd be afther havin' me to indite for you, ma'am?”

“Och, a letther, Sir—a letther, mather; an' may the Lord grant you all kinds of luck, good, bad, an' indifferent, both to you an' yours: an' well it's known, by the same token, that it's yourself has the nice hand at the pen entirely, an' can indite a letther or petition, that the priest o' the parish mightn't be ashamed to own to it.”

“Why, thin, 'tis I that 'ud scorn to deteriorate upon the superimminence of my own execution at inditin' wid a pen in my hand: but would you feel a delectability in my superscriptionizin' the epistolary correspondency, ma'am, that I'm about to adopt?”

“Eagh? ooh, what am I sayin'!—Sir—mather—Sir?—the noise of the crathurs, you see, is got into my ears; and, besides, I'm a bit bothered on both sides of my head, ever since I had that weary *weid*.”

“Silence, boys; bad manners to yez, will ye be asy, you Lilliputian Bœotians—by my s—hem—upon my credit, if I go down to that corner, I'll castigate yez in dozens: I can't spake to this dacent woman, with your insuperable turbulentiality.”

“Ah, avourneen, mather, but the larnin's a fine thing, any how; an' maybe 'tis yourself that hasn't the tongue in your head, an' can spake the tall, high-flown English; a wurrah, but your tongue hangs well, any how—the Lord increase it!”

“Lanty Cassidy, are you gettin' on wid yer Stereometry? *festina, mi discipuli; vocabo Homerum, mox atque mox*. You see, ma'am, I must tache thim to spake an' effectuate a translation of the larned languages sometimes.”

“Arrah, mather dear, how did you get it all into your head, at all at all?”

“Silence, boys—*tace*—‘*conticuere omnes intentique ora tenabant*.’ Silence, I say agin.”

“You could slip over, maybe, to Doran's, mather, do you see? You'd do it betther there, I'll engage: sure an' you'd want a dhrop to steady your hand, any how.”

"Now, boys, I am goin' to indite a small taste of literal correspondency over at the public-house here; you *litterati* will hear the lessons for me, boys, till afther I'm back agin; but mind, boys, *absente domino, strepuunt servi*—meditate on the philosophy of that; and, Mick Mahon, take your slate and put down all the names; and, upon my sou—hem—credit, I'll castigate any boy guilty of *misty manners* on my retrogradation thither;—*ergo momentote, cave ne titubes mandataque frangas.*"

"Blood alive, mather, but that's great spakin'—begar, a judge couldn't come up to you; but in throth, Sir, I'd be long sarry to throuble you; only he's away fifteen year, and I wouldn't thrust it to another; and the corplar that commands the ridgment would regard your hand-write and your inditin'.

"Don't, ma'am, plade the smallest taste of apology."

"Eagh?"

"I'm happy that I can sarve you, ma'am."

"Musha, long life to you, mather, for that same, any how—but it's yourself that's deep in the larnin' and the langridges; the Lord incrase yer knowledge—sure, an' we all want his blessin', you know."

THE RETURN.

"Well, boys, ye've been at it—here's swelled faces and bloody noses. What blackened your eye, Callaghan? You're a purty prime ministher, ye boxing blackguard, you: I left you to keep pace among these factions, and you've kicked up a purty dust. What blackened your eye—eh?"

"I'll tell you, Sir, whin I come in, if you plase."

"Ho, you vagabones, this is the ould work of the faction between the Bradys and the Callaghans—bastin' one another; but, by my sowl, I'll baste you all through other. You don't want to go out, Callaghan. You had fine work here since; there's a dead silence now; but I'll pay you presently. Here, Duggan, go out wid Callaghan, and see that you bring him back in less than no time. It's not enough for your fathers and brothers to be at it, who have a *right* to fight, but you must battle betune you—have your field days itsef!"

(*Duggan returns*)—"Hoo—hoo—Sir, my nose. Oh, *murder sheery*, my nose is broked!"

"Blow your nose, you spalpeen you—where's Callaghan?"

"Oh, Sir, bad luck to him every day he rises out of his bed; he got a stone in his fist, too, that he *hot* me a pelt on the nose wid, and then made off home."

"Home, is id? Start, boys, off—chase him, lie into him—asy, curse yez, take time gettin' out: that's it—keep to him—don't wait for me; take care, you little spalpeens, or you'll brake your bones, so you will: blow the dust of this road, I can't see my way in it!"

"Oh! murdher, Jem, agra, my knee's out o' joint."

"My elbow's smashed, Paddy. Bad luck to him—the devil fly away wid him—oh! ha! ha!—oh! ha! ha! murdher—hard fortune to me, but little Mickey Geery fell, an' thripped the mather, an' himself's disabled now—his black breeches split too—look at him feelin' them—

oh! oh! ha! ha!—by tare-an'-onty, Callaghan will be murdered, if they catch him."

This was a specimen of scholastic civilization which Ireland only could furnish; nothing, indeed, could be more perfectly ludicrous than such a chase; and such scenes were by no means uncommon in hedge schools, for, wherever severe punishment was dreaded—and, in truth, most of the hedge masters were unfeeling tyrants—the boy, if sufficiently grown to make a good race, usually broke away, and fled home at the top of his speed. The pack then were usually led on by the master, who mostly headed them himself, all in full cry exhibiting such a scene as should be witnessed in order to be enjoyed. The neighbours, men, women, and children, ran out to be spectators; the labourers suspended their work to enjoy it, assembling on such eminences as commanded a full view of the pursuit.

"Bravo, boys—success, masher; lie into him—where's your huntin'-horn, Mr. Kavanagh?—he'll bate yez, if ye don't take the wind of him. Well done, Callaghan, keep up yer heart, yer sowl, and you'll do it asy—you're gaining on them, *ma bouchal*—the masher's down, you gallows clip, an' there's none but the scholars ather ye—he's safe."

"Not he; I'll hould a naggin, the poor scholar has him; don't you see, he's close at his heels?"

"*Done*, by my song—they'll never come up wid him; listen to their leather crackers and cord-a-roys, as their knees bang agin one another. Hark forrit, boys! hark forrit! huzzaw, you thieves, huzzaw!"

"Your beagles is well winded, Mr. Kavanagh, and gives good tongue."

"Well, masher, you had your chase for nothin', I see."

"Mr. Kavanagh," another would observe, "I didn't think you war so stiff in the hams, as to let the gorsoon bate you that way—your wind's failin', Sir."

"The schoolmaster was abroad" then, and never was the "march of intellect" at once so rapid and unsuccessful.

During the summer season, it was the usual practice for the scholars to transfer their paper, slates, and books, to the green which lay immediately behind the school-house, where they stretched themselves on the grass, and resumed their business. Mat would bring out his chair, and, placing it on the shady side of the hedge, sit with his pipe in his mouth, the contented lord of his little realm, whilst nearly a hundred and fifty scholars, of all sorts and sizes, lay scattered over the grass, basking under the scorching sun in all the luxury of novelty, nakedness, and freedom. The sight was original and characteristic, and such as Lord Brongham would have been delighted with.—"The schoolmaster was abroad again."

As soon as one o'clock drew near, Mat would pull out his *Ring-dial*,* holding it against the sun, and declare the hour.

* The Ring-dial was the hedge-schoolmaster's next best substitute for a watch. As it is possible that a great number of our readers may never have heard of, much less seen one, we shall in a word or two describe it—nothing could indeed be more simple. It was a bright brass ring, about three quarters of an inch broad, and two and a half in diameter. There was a small hole in it, which when held opposite the sun admitted the light against the inside of the ring behind. On this was marked the hours and the quarters, and the time was known by observing the number or the quarter on which the slender ray that came in from the hole in front fell.

"Now, boys, to yer dinners, and the rest to play."

"Hurroo, darlins, to play—the masther says it's dinner time!—whip-spur-an'-away-grey—hurroo—whack—hurroo!"

"Masther, Sir, my father bid me ax you home to yer dinner."

"No, he'll come to huz— come wid me if you please, Sir."

"Sir, never heed *them*; my mother, Sir, has some of what you know—of the fitch I brought to Shoneen on last Aisther, Sir."

This was a subject on which the boys gave themselves great liberty; an invitation, even when not accepted, being an indemnity for the day; it was usually followed by a battle between the claimants, and bloody noses sometimes were the issue. The master himself, after deciding to go where he was certain of getting the best dinner, generally put an end to the quarrels by a reprimand, and then gave notice to the disappointed claimants of the successive days on which he would attend at their respective houses.

"Boys, you all know my maxim; to go, for fear of any jealousies, boys, wherever I get the *worst* dinner; so tell me now, boys, what yer dacent mothers have all got at home for me?"

"My mother killed a fat hen yesterday, Sir, an' you'll have a lump of bacon and flat dutch' along wid it."

"We'll have hung beef and greens, Sir."

"We tried the praties this mornin', Sir, an' we'll have new praties, and bread and butther, Sir."

"Well, it's all good, boys; but rather than show favour or affection, do you see, I'll go wid Andy, here, and take share of the hen an' bacon; but, boys, for all that, I'm fonder of the other things, you persave; and as I can't go wid you, Mat, tell your respectable mother that I'll be with her to-morrow; and with you, Larry, ma bouchal, the day after."

If a master were a single man, he usually "went round" with the scholars each night; but there were generally a few comfortable farmers, leading men in the parish, at whose house he chiefly resided; and the children of these men were treated with the grossest and most barefaced partiality. They were altogether privileged persons, and had liberty to beat and abuse the other children of the school, who were certain of being most unmercifully flogged, if they even dared to prefer a complaint against the favourites. Indeed the instances of atrocious cruelty in hedge schools were almost incredible, and such as, in the present enlightened time, would not be permitted. As to the state of the "poor scholar," it exceeded belief; for he was friendless and unprotected. But though legal prosecutions in those days were never resorted to, yet, according to the characteristic notions of Irish retributive justice, certain cases occurred, in which a signal, and at times, a fatal vengeance was executed on the person of the brutal master. Sometimes the brothers and other relatives of the mutilated child would come in a body to the school, and flog the pedagogue with his own taws, until his back was lapped in blood. Sometimes they would beat him until few symptoms of life remained.

Occasionally he would get a nocturnal notice to quit the parish in a given time, under a penalty which seldom proved a dead letter in case of non-compliance. Not unfrequently did those whom he had, when

boys, treated with such barbarity, go back to him, when young men, not so much for education's sake, as for the especial purpose of retaliating upon him for his former cruelty. When cases of this nature occurred, he found himself a mere cipher in his school, never daring to practise excessive severity in their presence. Instances have come to our own knowledge, of masters, who, for their mere amusement, would go out to the next hedge, cut a large branch of furze or thorn, and having first carefully arranged the children in a row round the walls of the school, their naked legs stretched out before them, would sweep round the branch, bristling with spikes and prickles, with all his force against their limbs, until, in a few minutes, a circle of blood was visible on the ground where they sat, their legs appearing as if they had been scarified. This the master did, whenever he happened to be drunk, or in a remarkably good humour. The poor children, however, were obliged to laugh loud, and enjoy it, though the tears were falling down their cheeks, in consequence of the pain he inflicted. To knock down a child with the fist, was considered nothing harsh; nor, if a boy were cut, or prostrated by a blow of a cudgel on the head, did he ever think of representing the master's cruelty to his parents. Kicking on the shins with the point of a brogue or shoe, bound round the edge of the sole with iron nails, until the bone was laid open, was a common punishment; and as for the usual slapping, horsing, and flogging, they were inflicted with a brutality that in every case richly deserved for the tyrant, not only a peculiar whipping by the hand of the common executioner, but a separation from civilized society by transportation for life. It is a fact, however, that in consequence of the general severity practised in hedge schools, excesses of punishment did not often produce retaliation against the master; these were only exceptions, isolated cases that did not affect the general character of the discipline in such schools.

Now when we consider the total absence of all moral and religious principles in these establishments, and the positive presence of all that was wicked, cruel, and immoral, need we be surprised that occasional crimes of a dark and cruel character should be perpetrated? The truth is, that it is difficult to determine, whether unlettered ignorance itself were not preferable to the kind of education which the people then received.

I am sorry to perceive the writings of many respectable persons on Irish topics imbued with a tinge of spurious liberality, that frequently occasions them to depart from truth. To draw the Irish character as it is, as the model of all that is generous, hospitable, and magnanimous, is in some degree fashionable; but although I am as warm an admirer of all that is really excellent and amiable in my countrymen as any man, yet I cannot, nor will I, extenuate their weak and indefensible points. That they possess the *elements* of a noble and exalted national character, I grant; nay, that they actually do possess such a character, under limitations, I am ready to maintain. Irishmen, setting aside their religious and political prejudices, are grateful, affectionate, honourable, faithful, generous, and even magnanimous; but, under the stimulus of religious and political feeling, they are treacherous, cruel, and inhuman—will murder, burn, and exterminate, not only without compunction, but with a

satanic delight worthy of a savage. Their education, indeed, was truly barbarous; they were trained and habituated to cruelty, revenge, and personal hatred, in their schools. Their knowledge was directed to evil purposes—disloyal principles were industriously insinuated into their minds by their teachers, most of whom were leaders of illegal associations. The matter placed in their hands was of a most inflammatory and pernicious nature, as regarded politics: and as far as religion and morality were concerned, nothing could be more gross and superstitious than the books which circulated among them. Eulogiums on murder, robbery, and theft, were read with delight in the histories of Freney the Robber, and the Irish Rogues and Rapparees; ridicule of the Word of God, and hatred to the Protestant Religion, in a book called Ward's Cantos, written in Hudibrastic verse; the downfall of the Protestant Establishment, and the exaltation of the Romish Church, in Columbkil's Prophecy, and latterly in that of Pastorini. Gross superstitions, political and religious ballads of the vilest doggerel, miraculous legends of holy friars persecuted by Protestants, and of signal vengeance inflicted by their divine power on those who persecuted them, were in the mouths of the young and old, and of course firmly fixed in their credulity.

Their weapons of controversy were drawn from the *Fifty Reasons*, the *Doleful Fall of Andrew Sall*, the *Catholic Christian*, the *grounds of the Catholic Doctrine*, a *Net for the Fishers of Men*, and several other publications of the same class. The books of amusement read in these schools, including the first-mentioned in this list, were, the *Seven Champions of Christendom*, the *Seven Wise Masters and Mistresses of Rome*, *Don Belianis of Greece*, the *Royal Fairy Tales*, the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, *Valentine and Orson*, *Gesta Romanorum*, *Dorastus and Faunia*, the *History of Reynard the Fox*, the *Chevalier Faublax*; to these I may add, the *Battle of Aughrim*, *Siege of Londonderry*, *History of the Young Ascanius*, a name by which the Pretender was designated, and the *Renowned History of the Siege of Troy*; the *Forty Thieves*, *Robin Hood's Garland*, the *Garden of Love* and *Royal Flower of Fidelity*, *Parismus and Parismenos*; along with others, the names of which shall not appear on these pages. With this specimen of education before our eyes, is it not extraordinary that the people of Ireland should be, in general, so moral and civilized a people as they are?

"Thady Bradly, will you come up wid your slate, till I examine you in your figures? Go out, Sir, and blow your nose first, and don't be after making a looking-glass out of the sleeve of your jacket. Now that Thady's out, I'll hould you, boys, that none of yez knows how to expound his name—eh? do ye? But I needn't ax—well, 'tis Thaddeus; and, maybe, that's as much as the priest that christened him knew. Boys, you see what it is to have the larnin'—to lade the life of a gintleman, and to be able to talk deeply wid the clargy! Now I could run down any man in arguin', except a priest; and if the bishop was afther consecratin' me, I'd have as much larnin' as some of them; but you see I'm not consecrated—and—well, 'tis no matther—I only say that the more's the pity.

"Well, Thady, when did you go into subtraction?"

"The day beyond yesterday, Sir; yarra musha, sure 'twas yourself, Sir, that shet me the first sum."

"Masther, Sir, Thady Bradly stole my cutter—that's *my* cutter, Thady Bradly."

"No it's not" (in a low voice).

"Sir, that's my cutter—an' there's three nicks in id."

"Thady, is that his cutter?"

"There's your cutter for you. Sir, I found it on the flure and didn't know who own'd it."

"You know'd very well who own'd it; didn't Dick Martin see you liftin' it off o' my slate, when I was out?"

"Well, if Dick Martin saw him, it's enough: an' 'tis Dick that's the tindher-hearted boy, an' would knock you down wid a lump of a stone, if he saw you murtherin' but a fly!

"Well, Thady—throth Thady, I fear you'll undherstand subtraction better nor your tacher: I doubt you'll apply it to 'Practice' all your life, ma bouchal, and that you'll be apt to find it 'the Rule of False'* at last. Well, Thady, from one thousand pounds, no shillings, and no pince, how will you subtract one pound? Put it down on your slate—this way,

$$1000 \quad 00 \quad 00$$

$$1 \quad 00 \quad 00$$

"I don't know how to shet about it, masther."

"You don't, an' how dare you tell me so, you *shingawn* you—you Cornelius Agrippa you—go to your sate and study it, or I'll—ha! be off, you"—

"Pierce Butler, come up wid your multiplication. Pierce, multiply four hundred by two—put it down—that's it,

$$400$$

$$\text{By } 2$$

"Twice nought is one." (Whack, whack.) "Take that as an illustration—is that one?"

"Faith, masther, that's two, any how; but, Sir, is not wanst nought nothin'; now, masther, sure there can't be less than nothin'."

"Very good, Sir."

"If wanst nought be nothin', then twice nought must be somethin', for it's double what wanst nought is—see how *I'm* strucked for *nothin'* an' me knows it—hoo! hoo! hoo!"

"Get out, you Esculapian; but I'll give you *somehin'*, by-and-by, just to make you remimber that you know *nothin'*—off wid you to your sate, you spalpeen you—to tell me that there can't be less than nothin' when it's well known that sporting Squire O'Canter is worth a thousand pounds less than nothin'."

"Paddy Doran, come up to your 'Intherest.' Well, Paddy, what's the intherest of a hundred pound, at five per cent? Boys, have manners you thieves you."

"Do you mane, masther, *per cent. per annum*?"

* The name of a "Rule" in Gough's Arithmetic.

"To be sure I do—how do you state it?"

"I'll say, as a hundher pound is to one year, so is five per cent. per annum."

"Hum—why what's the number of the sum, Paddy?"

"'Tis No. 84, Sir." (The master steals a glance at the Key to Gough.)

"I only want to look at it in the Gough, you see, Paddy,—an' how dare you give me such an answer, you big-headed dunce, you—go off an' study it, you rascally Lilliputian—off wid you, and don't let me see your ugly mug, till you know it."

"Now, *gentlemen*, for the Classics; and first for the Latinaarians—Larry Cassidy, come up wid your Aisop. Larry, you're a year at Latin, an' I don't think you know Latin for *frize*, what your own coat is made of, Larry. But, in the first place, Larry, do you know what a man that taiches Classics is called?"

"A schoolmaster, Sir." (Whack, whack, whack.)

"Take that for your ignorance—and that to the back of it—ha; that'll taiche you—to call a man that taiches Classics a schoolmaster, indeed! 'Tis a Professor of Humanity itself, he is—(whack, whack, whack,)—ha! you ringleader, you; you're as bad as Diok M'Growler, that no master in the county could get any good of, in regard that he put the whole school together by the ears, wherever he'd be, though the spalpeen wouldn't stand fight himself. Hard fortune to you! to go to put such an affront upon me, an' me a Professor of Humanity. What's Latin for pantaloons?"

"Fem—fem—femi—"

"No, it's not, Sir."

"Femora—"

"Can you do it?"

"Don't strike me, Sir, don't strike me, Sir, an' I will."

"I say, can you do it?"

"Femoralis,"—(whack, whack, whack,)—"Ah, Sir! ah, Sir! 'tis femoralis—ah, Sir! 'tis femoralis—ah, Sir!"

"This thretement to a Profiasor of Humanity—(drives him head over heels to his seat).—Now, Sir, maybe you'll have Latin for throwers agin, or by my sowl, if you don't, you must peel, and I'll tache you what a Profiasor of Humanity is!

"Dan Roe, you little starved-looking spalpeen, will you come up to your Illocution?—and a purty figure you cut at it, wid a voice like a penny trumpet, Dan! Well, what speech have you got now, Dan, ma bouchal. Is it, 'Romans, counthrymin, and lovers?'"

"No, Shir; yarra, didn't I *spaks* that speech before?"

"No, you didn't, you fairy. Ah, Dan, little as you are, you take credit for more than ever you spoke, Dan, agrah; but, faith, the same thrick will come agin you some time or other, avick! Go and get that speech better; I see by your face, you haven't it: off wid you, and get a patch upon your breeches, your little knees are through them, though 'tisn't by prayin' you've wore them, any how, you little hop-o'-my-thumb you, wid a voice like a rat in a thrap; off wid you, man alive!

Sometimes the neighbouring gentry used to call into Mat's establishment, moved probably by a curiosity excited by his character, and the general conduct of the school. On one occasion Squire Johnston and an English gentleman paid him rather an unexpected visit. Mat had that morning got a new scholar, the son of a dancing tailor in the neighbourhood; and as it was reported that the son was nearly equal to the father in that accomplishment, Mat insisted on having a specimen of his skill. He was the more anxious on this point, as it would contribute to the amusement of a travelling schoolmaster, who had paid him rather a hostile visit, which Mat, who dreaded a literary challenge, feared might occasion him some trouble.

"Come up here, you little *sartor*, till we get a dacent view of you. You're a son of Neil Malone's—aren't you?"

"Yes, and of Mary Malone, my mother, too, Sir."

"Why thin, that's not bad, any how—what's your name?"

"Dick, Sir."

"Now, Dick, ma bouchal, isn't it true that you can dance a horn-pipe?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Here, Larry Brady, take the door off the hinges, an' lay it down on the flure, till Dick Malone dances the Humours of Glynn: silence, boys, not a word; but just keep lookin' an."

"Who'll sing, Sir? for I can't be afther dancin' a step widout the music."

"Boys, which of yez'll sing for Dick? I say, boys, will none of yez give Dick the Harmony? Well, come, Dick, I'll sing for you myself:—

"Toral lol, loral lol, loral lol, loral, lol—
Toldherol, loral-lol, loral lol, lol," &c. &c.

"I say, Mистер Kavanagh," said the strange master, "what angle does Dick's heel form in the second step of the treble, from the kibe on the left foot to the corner of the door forinast him?"

To this mathematical poser Mat made no reply, only sang the tune with redoubled loudness and strength, whilst little Dicky pounded the old crazy door with all his skill and alacrity. The "boys" were delighted.

"Bravo, Dick, that's a man,—welt the flure—cut the buckle—murder the clocks—rise upon suggaun, and sink upon gad—down the flure flat, foot about—keep one foot on the ground and t'other never off it," saluted him from all parts of the house.

Sometimes he would receive a sly hint, in a feigned voice, to call for "Devil stick the Fiddler," alluding to the master. Now a squeaking voice would chime in; by and by another, and so on, until the master's bass had a hundred and forty trebles, all in chorus to the same tune.

Just at this moment the two gentlemen entered; and, reader, you may conceive, but I cannot describe, the face which Mat (who sat with his back to the door, and did not see them until they were some time in the house), exhibited on the occasion. There he sung *ore rotundo*, throwing forth an astounding tide of voice; whilst little Dick, a thin, pale-faced

urchin, with his head, from which the hair stood erect, sunk between his hollow shoulders, was performing prodigious feats of agility.

"What's the matter? what's the matter?" said the gentlemen.
 "Good morning, Mr. Kavanagh!"

"——Toral lol, lol——"

Oh, good——Oh, good morning——gentlemen, with extrame kindness," replied Mat, rising suddenly up, but not removing his hat, although the gentlemen instantly uncovered.

"Why, thin, gentlemen," he continued, "you have caught us in our litle relaxations to-day; but—hem!—I mane to give the boys a holiday for the sake of this honest and respectable gentleman in the frize jock, who is not entirely ignorant, you persave, of litherature; and we had a small taste, gentlemen, among ourselves, of Sathurnalian licentiousness, *ut ita dicam*, in regard of—hem!—in regard of this lad here, who was dancing a hornpipe upon the door, and we, in absence of betther music, had to supply him with the harmony; but as your honours know, gentlemen, the greatest men have bent themselves on espacial occasions."

"Make no apology, Mr. Kavanagh; it's very commendable in you to *bend* yourself by condescending to amuse your pupils."

"I beg your pardon, Squire, I can take freedoms with you; but perhaps the concomitant gentleman, your friend here, would be pleased to take my stool. Indeed, I always use a chair, but the back of it, if I may be permitted the use of a small portion of jocularly, was as frail as the fair sect: it went home yisterday to be mended. Do, Sir, condescind to be *sated*. Upon my reputation, Squire, I'm sorry that I have not accommodation for you, too, Sir; except one of these hassocks, which, in joint consideration with the length of your honour's legs, would be, I anticipate, rather low; but *you*, Sir, will honour me by taking the stool."

By considerable importunity he forced the gentleman to comply with his courtesy; but no sooner had he fixed himself upon the seat, than it overturned, and stretched him, black coat and all, across a wide concavity in the floor nearly filled up with white ashes produced from mountain turf. In a moment he was completely white on one side, and exhibited a most laughable appearance; his hat, too, was scorched, and nearly burned on the turf coals. Squire Johnston laughed heartily, as did the other schoolmaster, whilst the Englishman completely lost his temper—swearing that such another uncivilized establishment was not between the poles.

"I solemnly supplicate upwards of fifty pardons," said Mat; "bad manners to it for a stool! but, your honour, it was my own defect of speculation, bekase, you see, it's *minus* a leg—a circumstance of which you warn't in a proper capacity to take cognation, as not being personally acquainted with it. I humbly supplicate upwards of fifty pardons."

The Englishman was now nettled, and determined to wreak his ill temper on Mat, by turning him and his establishment into ridicule.

"Isn't this, Mister —— I forget your name, Sir."

"Mat Kavanagh, at your sarvice."

"Very well, my learned friend, Mr. Mat Kevanagh, isn't this precisely what is called a *hedge school*?"

"A hedge-school!" replied Mat, highly offended: "my seminary a nedge-school! No, Sir; I scorn the *cognomen in toto*. This, Sir, is a Classical and Mathematical Seminary, under the personal superintendence of your humble servant."

"Sir," replied the other master, who till then was silent, wishing, perhaps to *sack* Mat in presence of the gentlemen, "it is a hedge-school; and he is no scholar, but an ignoramus, whom I'd sack in three minutes, that would be ashamed of a hedge-school."

"Ay," says Mat, changing his tone, and taking the cue from his friend, whose learning he dreaded, "it's just, for argument's sake, a hedge-school; and, what is more, I scorn to be ashamed of it."

"And do you not teach occasionally under the hedge behind the house here?"

"Granted," replied Mat; "and now where's your *vis consequentia*?"

"Yes," subjoined the other, "produce your *vis consequentia*; but any one may know by a glance that the divil a much of it's about you."

"The Englishman himself was rather at a loss for the *vis consequentia*, and replied, "Why don't you live, and learn, and teach like civilized beings, and not assemble like wild asses—pardon me, my friend, for the simile—at least like wild colts, in such clusters behind the ditches?"

"A clusther of wild coults!" said Mat; "that shows what you are; no man of classical larnin' would use such a word. If you had stuck at the asses, we know it's a subject you're at home in—ha! ha! ha!—but you brought the joke on yourself, your honour—that is, if it is a joke—ha! ha! ha!"

"Permit me, Sir," replied the strange master, "to ax your honour one question—did you receive a *classical* education? Are you college-bred?"

"Yes," replied the Englishman; "I can reply to both in the affirmative. I'm a Cantabrigian."

"You are a *what*?" asked Mat.

"I am a Cantabrigian."

"Come, Sir, you must explain yourself, if you please. I'll take my oath that's neither a classical nor a mathematical tarm."

The gentleman smiled. "I was educated in the English College of Cambridge."

"Well," says Mat, "and may be you would be as well off if you had picked up your larnin' in our own Thrinity; there's good picking in Thrinity, for gentlemen like you, that are sober, and harmless about the brains, in regard of not being overly bright."

"You talk with contempt of a hedge-school," replied the other master. "Did you never hear, for all so long as you war in Cambridge, of a nate little spot in Greece called the groves of Academus?"

"*Inter lucos Academii querere verum.*"

What was Plato himself but a hedge schoolmaster? and, with humble submission, it casts no slur on an Irish tacher to be compared to *him*, I think. You forget also, Sir, that the Dhruids taught under their oaks: eh?"

"Ay," added Mat, "and the Tree of Knowledge, too. Faith, an' if that same tree was now in being, if there wouldn't be hedge schoolmasters, there would be plenty of hedge scholars, any how—particularly if the fruit was well tasted."

"I believe, Millbank, you must give in," said Squire Johnston. "I think you have got the worst of it."

"Why," said Mat, "if the gentleman's not ather bein' sacked clane, I'm not here."

"Are you a mathematician?" inquired Mat's friend, determined to follow up his victory; "do you know Mensuration?"

"Come, I do know Mensuration," said the Englishman, with confidence.

"And how would you find the solid contents of a *load of thorns*?" said the other.

"Ay, or how will you consther and parse me this sintince?" said Mat—

" Ragibus et clotibus solemus stopere windous,
Nos numerus sumus et fruges consumere nati,
Stercora fiat stiro raro terra-tantaro bungo."

"Aisy, Mister Kavanagh," replied the other; "let the Cantabrigian resolve the one I propounded him first."

"And let the Cantabrigian then take up mine," said Mat: "and if he can expound it, I'll give him a dozen more to bring home in his pocket, for the Cambridge folk to crack after their dinner, along wid their nuts."

"Can you do the 'Snail'?" inquired the stranger.

"Or 'A and Bonopposite sides of a wood,' without the Key?" said Mat.

"Maybe," said the stranger, who threw off the frize jock, and exhibited a muscular frame of great power, cased in an old black coat—"maybe the gentleman would like to get a small taste of the '*Scuffle*.'"

"Not at all," replied the Englishman; "I have not the least curiosity for it—I assure you I have not. What the deuce do they mean, Johnston? I hope you have influence over them."

"Hand me down that cudgel, Jack Brady, till I show the gentleman the 'Snail' and the 'Maypole,'" said Mat.

"Never mind, my lad; never mind, Mr. ———a———Kevanagh. I give up the contest; I resign you the palm, gentlemen. The hedge school has beaten Cambridge hollow."

"One poser more, before you go, Sir," said Mat—"Can you give me Latin for a *game-egg* in *two words*?"

"Eh, a game egg? No, by my honour, I cannot—gentlemen, I yield."

"Ay, I thought so," replied Mat; "and, faith, I believe the divil a much of the game bird about you—but bring it home to Cambridge, anyhow, and let them chew their cuds upon it, you persave; and, by the sowl of Newton, it will puzzle the whole establishment, or my name's not Kavanagh."

"It will, I am convinced," replied the gentleman, eyeing the herculean frame of the strange teacher and the substantial cudgel in Mat's hand; "it will, undoubtedly. But who is this most miserable naked lad here, Mr. Kevanagh?"

"Why, Sir," replied Mat, with his broad Milesian face, expanded by a forthcoming joke, "he is, Sir, in a sartin and especial particularity, a namesake of your own."

"How is that, Mr. Kevanagh?"

"My name's not Kevanagh," replied Mat, "but Kavanagh; the Irish A for ever!"

"Well, but how is the lad a namesake of mine?" said the Englishman.

"Bekase, you see, he's a *poor scholar*, Sir," replied Mat: "an' I hope your honour will pardon me for the facetiousness——"

"*Quid vetat ridentem dicere verum!*"

as Horace says to Mæcenas, in the first of the *Sathirs*."

"There, Mr. Kavanagh, is the price of a suit of clothes for him."

"Michael, will you rise up, Sir, and make the gentleman a bow? he has given you the price of a shoot of clothes, ma bouchal."

Michael came up with a very tattered coat hanging about him; and, catching his fore-lock, bobbed down his head after the usual manner, saying—"Musha yarra, long life to your honour every day you rise, an' the Lord grant your sowl a short stay in purgatory, wishin' ye, at the same time, a happy death afterwards!"

The gentleman could not stand this, but laughed so heartily that the argument was fairly knocked up.

It appeared, however, that Squire Johnston did not visit Mat's school from mere curiosity.

"Mr. Kavanagh," said he, "I would be glad to have a little private conversation with you, and will thank you to walk down the road a little with this gentleman and me."

When the gentlemen and Mat had gone ten or fifteen yards from the school door, the Englishman heard himself congratulated in the following phrases by the scholars:—

"How do you feel afther bein' *sacked*, gentleman? The masther sacked you! You're a purty scholar! It's not you, Mr. Johnston, it's the other. You'll come to argue agin, will you? Where's your head, now? Bah! Come back till we put the *suggaun** about your neck. Bah! You must go to school to Cam-bridge agin, before you can argue an Irisher! Look at the figure he cuts! Why duv ye put the one foot past the other, when ye walk, for? Bah! Dunce!!"

"Well, boys, never heed yez for that," shouted Mat; "never fear but I'll castigate yez, ye spalpeen villains, as soon as I go back. Sir," said Mat, "I supplicate upwards of fifty pardons. I assure you, Sir, I'll give them a most inordinate castigation, for their want of respectability."

"What's the Greek for tobaccy?" they continued—"or for Larry O'Toole? or for bletherum skite? How many beans makes five? What's the Latin for poteen, and flummery? You a mathemathician! could you measure a snail's horn? How does your hat stay up and nothing undher it? Will you fight Barney Farrell wid one hand tied! I'd lick you myself! What's the Greek for goster?"—with many other expressions of a similar stamp.

"Sir," said Mat, "lave the justice of this in my hands. By the sowl of Newton, your own counthryman, ould Isaac, I'll flog the marrow out of them."

"You have heard, Mr. Kavanagh," continued Mr. Johnston, as they went along, "of the burning of Moore's stable and horses, the night

* The *suggaun* was a collar of straw which was put round the necks of the dunces, who were then placed at the door, that their disgrace might be as public as possible.

before last. The fact is, that the magistrates of the county are endeavouring to get the incendiaries, and would render a service to any person capable, either directly or indirectly, of facilitating that object, or stumbling on a clew to the transaction."

"And how could I do you a sarvice in it, Sir?" inquired Mat.

"Why," replied Mr. Johnston, "from the children. If you could sift them in an indirect way, so as, without suspicion, to ascertain the absence of a brother, or so, on that particular night, I might have it in my power to serve you, Mr. Kavanagh. There will be a large reward offered to-morrow, besides."

"Oh, damn the penny of the reward ever I'd finger, even if I knew the whole conflagration," said Mat; "but lave the sifin' of the children wid myself, and if I can get anything out of them you'll hear from me; but your honour must keep a close mouth, or you might have occasion to lend me the money for my own funeral some o' these days. Good morning, gintlemen."

The gentlemen departed.

"May the most ornamental kind of hard fortune pursue you every day you rise, you desavin' villain, that would have me turn *informer*, bekase your brother-in-law, rack-rintin' Moore's stables and horses were burnt; and to crown all, make the innocent childre the means of hanging their own fathers or brothers, you rap of the divil! but I'd see you and all your breed in the flames o' hell first." Such was Mat's soliloquy as he entered the school on his return.

"Now, boys, I'm afther givin' yez to-day and to-morrow for a holy-day: to-morrow we will have our Gregory;* a fine faste, plinty of poteen, and a fiddle; and you will tell your brothers and sisters to come in the evening to the dance. You must bring plinty of bacon, hung beef, and fowls, bread and cabbage—not forgetting the phaties, and sixpence a-head for the *crathur*, boys, won't yez?"

The next day, of course, was one of festivity: every boy brought, in fact, as much provender as would serve six; but the surplus gave Mat some good dinners for three months to come. This feast was always held upon St. Gregory's day, from which circumstance it had its name. The pupils were at liberty for that day to conduct themselves as they pleased: and the consequence was, that they became generally intoxicated, and were brought home in that state to their parents. If the children of two opposite parties chanced to be at the same school, they usually had a fight, of which the master was compelled to feign ignorance; for if he identified himself with either faction, his residence in the neighbourhood would be short. In other districts, where Protestant schools were in existence, a battle-royal commonly took place between the opposite establishments, in some field lying half-way between them. This has often occurred.

Every one must necessarily be acquainted with the ceremony of *barring*

* This was precisely such a feast as is described in the text. Gregories were in general very beneficial to the masters, inasmuch as there was more provender and drink brought to his house, where the festival was held, than would feed the number of mouths appointed to partake of it a dozen times over. The description of it above is very correct.

out. This took place at Easter and Christmas. The master was brought or sent out on some fool's errand, the door shut and barricaded, and the pedagogue excluded, until a certain term of vacation was extorted. With this, however, the master never complied until all his efforts at forcing an entrance were found to be ineffectual; because if he succeeded in getting in, they not only had no claim to a long vacation, but were liable to be corrected. The schoolmaster had also generally the clerkship of the parish; an office, however, which in the country parts of Ireland is without any kind of salary, beyond what results from the patronage of the priest; a matter of serious moment to a teacher, who, should he incur his Reverence's displeasure, would be immediately driven out of the parish. The master, therefore, was always tyrannical and insolent to the people, in proportion as he stood high in the estimation of the priest. He was also a regular attendant at all wakes and funerals, and usually sat among a crowd of the village sages engaged in exhibiting his own learning, and in recounting the number of his religious and literary disputations.

One day, soon after the visit of the gentlemen above mentioned, two strange men came into Mat's establishment—rather, as Mat thought, in an unceremonious manner.

"Is your name Matthew Kavanagh?" said one of them.

"That is indeed the name that's upon me," said Mat, with rather an infirm voice, whilst his face got as pale as ashes.

"Well," said the fellow, "we'll jist trouble you to walk with us a bit."

"How far, with submission, are yez goin' to bring me?" said Mat.

"Do you know Johnny Short's hotel?"*

"My curse upon you Findramore," exclaimed Mat, in a paroxysm of anguish, "every day you rise! but your breath's unlucky to a schoolmaster; and it's no lie what was often said, that no schoolmaster ever thriv in you, but something ill came over him."

"Don't curse the town, man alive," said the constable, "but curse your own ignorance and folly; any way, I wouldn't stand in your coat for the wealth of the three kingdoms. You'll undoubtedly swing, unless you turn king's evidence. It's about Moore's business, Mr. Kavanagh."

"Damn the bit of that I'd do, even if I knew any thing about it; but, God be praised for it, I can set them all at defiance—that I'm sure of. Gintlemen, innocence is a jewel."

"But Barney Brady, that keeps the shebeen house—you know *him*—is of another opinion. You and some of the Findramore boys took a sup in Barney's on a sartin night?"

"Ay, did we, on many a night, and will agin, please Providence—no harm in takin' a sup, any how—by the same token, that maybe you and yer friend here would have a drop of rale stuff, as a thrate from me?"

"I know a thriek worth two of that," said the man; "I thank ye kindly, Mr. Kavanagh."

One Tuesday morning, about six weeks after this event, the largest

* The county-gaol.—Johnny Short was for many years the Governor of Monaghan Gaol. It was to him that the *Mitimus* of "Fool Art," mentioned in Phelim O'Toole's Courtship, was directed. If the reader will suspend his curiosity, that is, provided he feels any, until he comes to the sketch just mentioned, he will get a more ample account of Johnny Short.

crowd ever remembered in that neighbourhood was assembled at Findra-more Hill, whereon had been erected a certain wooden machine, yclept—a gallows. A little after the hour of eleven o'clock, two carts were descried winding slowly down a slope in the southern side of the town and church, which I have already mentioned, as terminating the view along the level road north of the hill. As soon as they were observed, a low, suppressed ejaculation of horror ran through the crowd, painfully perceptible to the ear—in the expression of ten thousand murmurs all blending into one deep groan—and to the eye, by a simultaneous motion that ran through the crowd like an electric shock. The place of execution was surrounded by a strong detachment of military; and the carts that conveyed the convicts were also strongly guarded.

As the prisoners approached the fatal spot, which was within sight of the place where the outrage had been perpetrated, the shrieks and lamentations of their relations and acquaintances were appalling indeed. Fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, cousins, and all persons to the most remote degree of kindred and acquaintanceship, were present—all excited by the alternate expression of grief and low-breathed vows of retaliation; not only relations, but all who were connected with them by the bonds of their desperate and illegal oaths. Every eye, in fact, coruscated with a wild and savage fire, that shot from under brows knit in a spirit that seemed to cry out Blood, vengeance—blood, vengeance! The expression was truly awful; and what rendered it more terrific was the writhing reflection, that numbers and physical force were unavailing against a comparatively small body of armed troops. This condensed the fiery impulse of the moment into an expression of subdued rage, that really shot like livid gleams from their visages.

At length the carts stopped under the gallows; and, after a short interval spent in devotional exercise, three of the culprits ascended the platform, who, after recommending themselves to God, and avowing their innocence, although the clearest possible evidence of guilt had been brought against them, were launched into another life, among the shrieks and groans of the multitude. The other three then ascended; two of them either declined, or had not strength to address the assembly. The third advanced to the edge of the boards—*it was Mat.* After two or three efforts to speak, in which he was unsuccessful from bodily weakness, he at length addressed them as follows:—

“My friends and good people—In hopes that you may be all able to demonstrate the last proposition laid down by a dying man, I undertake to address you before I depart to that world where Euclid, De Cartes, and many other larned men are gone before me. There is nothing in all philosophy more true, than that, as the multiplication-table says, ‘two and two makes four;’ but it is equally veracious and worthy of credit, that if you do not abnegate this system that you work the common rules of your proceedings by—if you don’t become loyal men, and give up burnin’ and murdherin’, the solution of it will be found on the gallows. I acknowledge myself to be guilty, for not separatin’ myself clane from yez; we have been all guilty, and may God forgive thim that jist now departed wid a lie in their mouth.”

Here he was interrupted by a volley of execrations and curses, mingled with "stag, informer, thraithor to the thruce cause!" which, for some time, compelled him to be silent.

"You may curse," continued Mat; "but it's too late now to abscond the truth—the 'sum' of my wickedness and folly is worked out, and you see the 'answer.' God forgive me, many a young crathur I enticed into the *Ribbon* business, and now it's to ind in *Hemp*! Obey the law; or, if you don't, you'll find a *lex talionis*—the construction of which is, that if a man burns or murders, he won't miss hanging; take warning by me—by us all; for, although I take God to witness that I was not at the perpetration of the crime that I'm to be suspended for, yet I often connived, when I might have superseded the carrying of such intintions into effectuality. I die in pace wid all the world, save an' except the Findramore people, whom, may the maledictionary execration of a dying man follow into eternal infinity! My manuscription of conic sections—" Here an extraordinary buz commenced among the crowd, which rose gradually into a shout of wild, astounding exultation. The sheriff followed the eyes of the multitude, and perceived a horseman dashing with breathless fury up towards the scene of execution. He carried and waved a white handkerchief on the end of a rod, and made signals with his hat to stop the execution. He arrived, and brought a full pardon for Mat, and a commutation of sentence to transportation for life, for the other two. What became of Mat I know not; but in Findramore he never dared to appear, as certain death would have been the consequence of his not dying *game*. With respect to Barny Brady, who kept the shebeen, and was the principal evidence against those who were concerned in this outrage, he was compelled to enact an *ex tempore* death in less than a month afterwards; having been found dead, with a slip of paper in his mouth, inscribed—" *This is the fate of all Informers.*"





THE MIDNIGHT MASS

FRANK M'KENNA was a snug farmer, frugal and industrious in his habits, and, what is rare amongst most men of his class, addicted to neither drink nor quarrelling. He lived at the skirt of a mountain, which ran up in long successive undulations, until it ended in a dark, abrupt peak, very perpendicular on one side, and always, except on a bright day, capped with clouds. Before his door lay a hard plain, covered only with a kind of bent, and studded with round gray rocks, protruding somewhat above its surface. Through this plain, over a craggy channel, ran a mountain torrent, that issued to the right of M'Kenna's house, from a rocky and precipitous valley which twisted itself round the base of the mountain until it reached the perpendicular side, where the peak actually overhung it. On looking either from the bottom of the valley or the top of the peak, the depth appeared immense; and, on a summer's day, when the black thorns and other hardy shrubs that in some places clothed its rocky sides were green, to view the river sparkling below you in the sun, as it flung itself over two or three cataracts of great depth and boldness, filled the mind with those undefinable sensations of pleasure inseparable from a contemplation of the sublimities of nature. Nor did it possess less interest when beheld in the winter storm. Well do we remember, though then

ignorant of our own motives, when we have, in the turmoil of the elements, climbed its steep, shaggy sides, disappearing like a speck, or something not of earth, among the dark clouds that rolled over its summit, for no other purpose than to stand upon its brow, and look down on the red torrent, dashing with impetuosity from crag to crag, whilst the winds roared, and the clouds flew in dark columns around us, giving to the natural wildness of the place an air of wilder desolation.—Beyond this glen the mountains stretched away for eight or ten miles in swelling masses, between which lay many extensive sweeps, well sheltered and abundantly stocked with game, particularly with hares and grouse. M'Kenna's house stood, as I said, at the foot of this mountain, just where the yellow surface of the plain began to darken into the deeper hues of the heath; to the left lay a considerable tract of stony land in a state of cultivation; and beyond the river, exactly opposite the house, rose a long line of hills, studded with houses, and in summer diversified with pasture and corn fields, the beauty of which was heightened by the columns of smoke that slanted across the hills, as the breeze carried them through the lucid haze of the atmosphere.

M'Kenna's family consisted of himself, his wife, two daughters, and two sons. One of these was a young man addicted to drink, idle, ill-tempered, and disobedient; seldom taking a part in the labours of the family, but altogether devoted to field sports, fairs, markets, and dances. In many parts of Ireland it is usual to play at cards for mutton, loaves, fowls, or whiskey, and he was seldom absent from such gambling parties, if held within a reasonable distance. Often had the other members of the family remonstrated with him on his idle and immoral courses; but their remonstrances only excited his bad passions, and produced, on his part, angry and exasperating language, or open determinations to abandon the family altogether and enlist. For some years he went on in this way, a hardened, ungodly profligate, spurning the voice of reproof and of conscience, and insensible to the intreaties of domestic affection, or the commands of parental authority. Such was his state of mind and mode of life when our story opens.

At the time in which the incidents contained in this sketch took place, the peasantry of Ireland, being less encumbered with heavy rents, and more buoyant in spirits than the decay of national prosperity has of late permitted them to be, indulged more frequently, and to a greater stretch, in those rural sports and festivities so suitable to their natural love of humour and amusement. Dances, wakes, and weddings, were then held according to the most extravagant forms of ancient usage; the people were easier in their circumstances, and consequently indulged in them with lighter hearts, and a stronger relish for enjoyment. When any of the great festivals of their religion approached, the popular mind, unrepressed by poverty and national dissension, gradually elevated itself to a species of wild and reckless mirth, productive of incidents irresistibly ludicrous, and remarkably characteristic of Irish manners. It is not, however, to be expected, that a people whose love of fighting is so innate a principle in their disposition, should celebrate these festive seasons without an occasional crime, which threw its deep shadow over the mirthful character of

their customs. Many such occurred ; but they were looked upon then with a degree of horror and detestation of which we can form but a very inadequate idea at present. .

It was upon the advent of one of those festivals—Christmas—which the family of M'Kenna, like every other family in the neighbourhood, were making preparations to celebrate with the usual hilarity. They cleared out their barn in order to have a dance on Christmas-eve ; and for this purpose, the two sons and the servant-man wrought with that kind of industry produced by the cheerful prospect of some happy event. For a week or fortnight before the evening on which the dance was appointed to be held, due notice of it had been given to the neighbours, and, of course, there was no doubt but that it would be numerously attended.

Christmas-eve, as the day preceding Christmas is called, has been always a day of great preparation and bustle. Indeed the whole week previous to it is also remarkable, as exhibiting the importance attached by the people to those occasions on which they can give a loose to their love of fun and frolic. The farm-house undergoes a thorough cleansing. Father and sons are, or rather used to be, all engaged in repairing the out-houses, patching them with thatch where it was wanted, mending mangers, paving stable floors, fixing cow-stakes, making boraghs *, removing nuisances, and cleaning streets.

On the other hand, the mother, daughters, and maids, were also engaged in their several departments ; the latter scouring the furniture with sand ; the mother making culinary preparations, baking bread, killing fowls, or salting meat ; whilst the daughters were unusually intent upon the decoration of their own dress, and the making up of the family linen. All, however, was performed with an air of gaiety and pleasure ; the ivy and holly were disposed about the dressers and collar beams with great glee ; the chimneys were swept amidst songs and laughter ; many bad voices, and some good ones, were put in requisition ; whilst several who had never been known to chaunt a stave, alarmed the listeners by the grotesque and incomprehensible nature of their melody. Those who were inclined to devotion—and there is no lack of it in Ireland—took to carols and hymns, which they sang, for want of better airs, to tunes highly comic. We have ourselves often heard the Doxology sung in Irish verse to the facetious air of “ Paudeen O'Rafferty ;” and other hymns to the tune of “ Peas upon a Trencher,” and “ Cruskeen Lawn.” Sometimes, on the contrary, many of them, from the very fulness of jollity, would become pathetic, and indulge in those touching old airs of their country, which may be truly called songs of sorrow, from the exquisite and simple pathos with which they abound. This, though it may seem anomalous, is but natural ; for there is nothing so apt to recall to the heart those friends, whether absent or dead, with whom it has been connected, as a stated festival. Affection is then awakened, and summons to the hearth where it presides those on whose faces it loves to look ; if they be living, it places them in the circle of happiness which surrounds it ; and if they be removed for ever from such scenes, their memory, which, amidst the

* The rope with which a cow is tied in the cow-house.

din of ordinary life, has almost passed away, is now restored, and their loss felt as if it had been only just then sustained.

For this reason, at such times, it is not at all unusual to see the elders of Irish families touched by pathos as well as humour. The Irish are a people whose affections are as strong as their imaginations are vivid; and, in illustration of this, we may add, that many a time have we seen them raised to mirth and melted into tears almost at the same time, by a song of the most comic character. The mirth, however, was for the song, and the sorrow for the memory of some beloved relation who had been remarkable for singing it, or with whom it had been a favourite.

We do not affirm that in the family of the M'Kennas there were, upon the occasion which we are describing, any tears shed. The enjoyments of the season, and the humours of the expected dance, both combined to give them a more than usual degree of mirth and frolic. At an early hour all that was necessary for the due celebration of that night and the succeeding day, had been arranged and completed. The whiskey had been laid in, the Christmas candles bought, the barn cleared out, the seats laid; in short, every thing in its place, and a place for every thing. About one o'clock, however, the young members of the family began to betray some symptoms of uneasiness; nor was M'Kenna himself, though the *faritheo* or *man of the house*, altogether so exempt from what they felt, as might, if the cause of it were known to our readers, be expected from a man of his years and experience.

From time to time one of the girls tripped out as far as the stile before the door, where she stood looking in a particular direction until her sight was fatigued.

"Och, och," her mother exclaimed during her absence, "but that colleen's sick about Barny!—musha, but it would be the beautiful joke, all out, if he'd disappoint the whole of yez. Faix, it wouldn't be unlike the same man, to go to wherever he can make most money; and sure small blame to him for that; what's one place to him more than another?"

"Hut," M'Kenna replied, rising, however, to go out himself, "the girsha's makin' a *baulioire** of herself."

"An' where's yourself slippin' out to?" rejoined his wife, with a wink of shrewd humour at the rest. "I say, Frank, are *you* goin' to look for him too? Mavrone, but that's sinsible! Why, thin, you snakin' ould rogue, is that the way wid you? Throth I have often hard it said, that 'one fool makes many;' but sure enough, 'an ould fool's worse nor any.' Come in here this minnte, I say—walk back—you to have your horn up!—Faix, indeed!"

"Why, I am only goin' to get the small phaties boiled for the pigs, poor crathurs, for their Christmas dinner. Sure we oughtn't to neglect thim no more than ourselves, the crathurs, that can't spake their wants, except by gruntin'."

"Saints above!—the Lord forgive me for bringin' down *their* names upon a Christmas eve!—but it's beside himself the man is!—an' him

* A laughing-stock.

knows that the phaties wor boiled an' made up into balls for them airly this mornin'!

In the mean time, the wife's good-natured attack upon her husband produced considerable mirth in the family. In consequence of what she said, he hesitated; but ultimately was proceeding towards the door, when the daughter returned, her brow flushed, and her eye sparkling with mirth and delight.

"Ha!" said the father, with a complacent smile, "all's right, Peggy; you seen him, a lanna. The music's in your eye, a cushla; an' the feet of you can't keep themselves off o' the ground; an' all bekaese you seen Barny *Dhal** pokin' across the fields, wid his head up, an' his skirt stickin' out behind him wid Granua Waile."†

The father had conjectured properly, for the joy which animated the girl's countenance could not be misunderstood.

"Barny's comin'," she exclaimed, clapping her hands with great glee, "an' our Frank wid him; they're at the river, and Frank has him on his back, and Granua Waile undher his arm! Come out, come out! You'll die for good, lookin' at them staggerin' across. I knew he'd come! I knew it! God be good to thim that invinted Christmas; it's a brave time, faix!"

In a moment the inmates were grouped before the door, all anxious to catch a glimpse of Barny and Granua Waile.

"Faix ay! Sure enough. Sarra doubt of it! Whethen, I'd never mistrust Barny!" might be heard in distinct exclamations from each.

"Faith he's a Trojan," said the *farithoe*, "an' must get lashins of the best we have. Come in, childher, an' red the hob for him.

"Och, Christmas comes but wanst a year,
An' Christmas comes but wanst a year;
An' the divil a mouth
Shall be friends wid drouth,
While I have whiskey, ale, or beer.
Och, Christmas comes but wanst a year,
An' Christmas comes but wanst a year,
Wid han' in han',
An' can to can,
Then Hi for the whiskey, ale, and beer.
Och, Christmas comes but wanst a year,
An' Christmas comes but wanst a year;
Then the high and the low
Shall shake their toe,
When primed wid whiskey, ale, an' beer."

For all that, the sorra fig I care for either ale or beer, barrin' in regard of mere drouth; give me the whiskey. Eh, Alley—won't we have a jorum any how?"

"Why, thin," replied the wife, "the devil be from me (the crass about us for namin' him) but you're a greater *Brinoge* than some of your childher! I suppose it's *your* capers Frank has in him. Will you behave ourself, you old slingpoke? Behave, I say, an' let me go. Childher, will you help me to flake this man out o' the place? Look at him, here, caperin' an' crackin' his fingers afore me, an' pullin' me out to dance!"

* Barny Dhal—blind Barny.

† The name of his fiddle.

"Och, och, murder alive," exclaimed the good man, out of breath, "I seen the day, any way! An', maybe, could show a step or two yet, if I was well vexed. You can't forget ould times, Alley? Eh, you thief?"

"Musha, have sinse, man alive," replied the wife, in a tone of placid gravity, which only betrayed the pleasure she herself felt in his happiness. "Have sinse, an' the strange man comin' in, an' don't let him see you in such figaries."

The observation of the good woman produced a loud laugh among them. "Arrah, what are yez laughin' at?" she inquired.

"Why, mother," said one of her daughters, "how could Barny *Dhal*, a blind man, see any body?"

Alley herself laughed at her blunder, but wittily replied, "Faith, avourneen, maybe he can often see as natly through his ear, as you could do wid your eyes open; sure they say he can hear the grass growin'."

"For that matther," observed the *farithes*, joining in the joke, "he can see as far as any of us—while we're asleep."

The conversation was thus proceeding, when Barny *Dhal* and young Frank M'Kenna entered the kitchen.

In a moment all hands were extended to welcome Barny: "*Millia faithe ghud*, Barny!" "*Cead millia faithe ghud*, Barny!" "Oh, Barny, did you come at last? You're welcome." "Barny, my Trojan, how is every cart-load of you?" "How is Granua Waile, Barny?"

"Why thin, holy music, did you never see Barny *Dhal* afore? Clear off from about me, or, by the sweets of rosin, I'll play the devil an' brake things. 'You're welcome, Barny!'—an' 'How are you, Barny?' Why thin, piper o' Moses, don't I know I'm welcome, an' yit you must be tellin' me what every body knows! But sure I have great news for you all!"

"What is that, Barny?"

"Well, but can yez keep a sacret? Can yez, girls?"

"Faix can we, Barny, achora."

"Well, so can I—ha, ha, ha! Now, are yez sarved? Come, let me to the hob."

"Here, Barny; I'll lead you, Barny."

"No, I *have* him; come, Barny, I'll lead you: here, achora, this is the spot—that's it. Why, Barny," said the arch girl, as she placed him in the corner, "sorra one o' the hob but knows you: it never stirs—ha, ha, ha!"

"Throth, a colleen, that tongue o' yours will delude some one afore long, if it hasn't done so already."

"But how is Granua Waile, Barny?"

"Poor Granua is it? Faith, times is hard wid her often. 'Granua,' says I to her, 'what do you say, acushla? we're axed to go to two or three places to-day—what do you say? Do you lead, an' I'll follow: your will is my pleasure.' 'An' where are we axed to?' says Granua, sinsible enough. 'Why,' says I, 'to Paddy Lanigan's, to Mike Hartigan's, to Jack Lynch's, an', at the heel o' the hunt, to Frank M'Kenna's, of the Mountain Bar.' 'By my song,' says she, 'you may go where you please; as for me, I'm off to Frank M'Kenna's, one of the dacentest men in

Europe, an' his wife the same. Divil a toe I'll set a waggin' in any other place this night,' says she; 'for 'tis there we're both well thrated wid the best the house can afford. So,' says she, 'in the name of all that's musical, you're welcome to the poker an' tongs any where else: for me, I'm off to Frank's.' An' faith, sure enough, she took to her pumps; an' it was only comin' over the hill there, that young Frank an' I overtuck her: divil a lie in it."

In fact, Barny, besides being a fiddler, was a *sonachis* of the first water; could tell a story, or trace a genealogy as well as any man living, and draw the long bow in either capacity much better than he could in the practice of his more legitimate profession.

"Well, here she is, Barny, to the fore," said the aforesaid arch girl, "an' now give us a tune."

"What!" replied the *faristee*, "is it widout either aitin' or dhrinkin'? Why, the giraha's beside herself! Alley, aroon, get him the linin' * an' a sup to tighten his elbow."

The good woman instantly went to provide refreshments for the musician.

"Come, girls," said Barny, "will yez get me a scythe or a handsaw?"

"A scythe or a handsaw! eh, then what to do, Barny?"

"Why, to pare my nails, to be sure," replied Barny, with a loud laugh; "but stay—come back here—I'll make shift to do wid a pair of scissors this bout.

"The parent finds his sons,
The tutherer whips them;
The nailer makes his nails,
The fiddler clips them."

Wherever Barny came there was mirth, and a disposition to be pleased, so that his jokes always told.

"Musha, the sorra *pare* you, Barny," said one of the girls; "but there's no bein' up to you, good or bad."

"The sorra *pair* me, is it? *faix*, Nancy, you'll soon be paired yourself wid some one, avourneen. Do you know a sartin young man wid a nose on him runnin' to a point like the pin of a sun-dial, his knees brakin' the king's pace, strikin' one another ever since he was able to walk, an' that was about four years after he could say his *Pather Nosther*; an' faith, whatever you may think, there's no makin' them paeable except by puttin' between them! The wrong side of his shin, too, is foremost; an' though the one-half of his two feet is all heels, he keeps the same heels for set days an' bonfire nights, an' savinly walks on his anoles. His leg, too, Nancy, is stuck in the middle of his foot, like a poker in a pickaxe; an', along wid all——"

"Here, Barny, thry your hand at this," said the good woman, who had not heard his ludicrous description of her fictitious son-in-law—" *eah arran agus beé laudher*, Barny, *ate bread and be strong*. I'll warrant when you begin to play, they'll give you little time to do any thing but scrape away;—taste the dhrink first, any way, in the name o' God,"—and she filled him a glass.

* Linin—lining, so eating and drinking are often humorously termed by the people.

"Augh, augh! faith you're the moral of a woman. Are you there, Frank M'Kenna?—here's a sudden disholution to your family! May they be scattered wid all speed—manin' the girls—to all corners o' the parish!—ha, ha, ha! Well, *that* won't vex them, any how; an' next, here's a merry Chris'mas to us, an' many o' them! Whooh! blur-an'-age!—whooh! oh, by gorra!—that's—that's—Frank run afther my breath—I've lost it—run, you tory: oh, by gor, that's stuff as sthrong as Sampeon, so it is. Arrah, what well do you dhraw that from? for, faith, 'twould be mighty convanient to live near it in a hard frost."

Barny was now silent for some time, which silence was produced by the industry he displayed in assailing the substantial refreshments before him. When he had conoluded his repast he once more tasted the liquor; after which he got Granua Waile, and continued playing their favourite tunes, and amusing them with anecdotes, both true and false, until the hour drew nigh when his services were expected by the young men and maidens who had assembled to dance in the barn. Occasionally, however, they took a preliminary step, in which they were joined by a few of their neighbours. Old Frank himself felt his spirits elevated by contemplating the happiness of his children and their young associates.

"Frank," said he, to the youngest of his sons, "go down to Owen Reillaghan's, and tell him an' his family to come up to the dance early in the evenin'. Owen's a pleasant man," he added, "and a good neighbour, but a small thought too strict in his duties. Tell him to come up, Frank, airly, I say; he'll have time enough to go to the Midnight Mass afther dancin' the 'Rakes of Ballyshanny,' and 'the Baltihorum jig;' an' maybe he can't do both in style!"

"Ay," said Frank, in his jeering manner, "he carries a handy heel at the dancin', and a soople tongue at the prayin'; but let him alone for bringin' the bottom of his glass and his eyebrow acquainted. But if he'd pray less——"

"Go along, *a veehonoe*,* an' bring him up," replied the father: "you to talk about prayin'! Them that 'ud catch you at a prayer ought to be showed for the world to wondher at: a man wid two heads an him would be a fool to him. Go along, I say, and do what you're bid."

"I'm goin'," said Frank, "I'm off; but what if he doesn't come? I'll then have my journey for nothin'."

"An' it's good payment for any journey ever you'll make, barrin' it's to the gallows," replied the father, nearly provoked at his reluctance in obeying him: "won't *you* have dancin' enough in the coorse o' the night, for *you'll* not go to the Midnight Mass, and why don't you be off wid you at wanst?"

Frank shrugged his shoulders two or three times, being loth to leave the music and dancing; but on seeing his father about to address him in sharper language, he went out with a frown on his brows, and a half-smothered imprecation bursting from his lips.

He had not proceeded more than a few yards from the door, when he met Rody Teague, his father's servant, on his way to the kitchen.

* You profligate.

"Rody," said he, "isn't this a purty business? My father wantin' to send *me* down to Owen Reillaghan's; when, by the vartue o' my oath, I'd as soon go half way into hell, as to any place where his son, Mike Reillaghan, 'ud be. How will I manage, Rody?"

"Why," replied Rody, "as to meetin' wid Mike, take my advice and avoid him. And what is more, I'd give up Peggy Gartland for good. Isn't it a mane thing for you, Frank, to be hangin' afther a girl that's fonder of another than she is of yourself. By this and by that, I'd no more do it—awouh! catch me at it—I'd have spunk in me."

Frank's brow darkened as Rody spoke; instead of instantly replying, he was silent, and appeared to be debating some point in his own mind, on which he had not come to a determination.

"My father didn't hear of the fight between Mike and me?" said he interrogatively—"do you think he did, Rody?"

"Not to my knowledge," replied the servant; "if he did, he wouldn't surely send *you* down; but, talking of the fight, you are known to be a stout, well-fought boy—no doubt of that—still, I say, you had no right to provoke Mike as you did, who, it's well known, could bate any two men in the parish; and so sign, you got yourself dacently trounced, about a girl that doesn't love a bone in your skin."

"He disgraced me, Rody," observed Frank—"I can't rise my head; and you know I was thought by, all the parish, as good a man as him. No, I wouldn't, this blessed Christmas Eve above us, for all that ever my name was worth, be disgraced by him as I am. But—hould, man—have patience!"

"Throth and, Frank, that's what *you* never had," said Rody; "and as to bein' disgraced, you disgraced yourself. What right had you to challenge the boy to fight, and to strike him into the bargain, bekaase Peggy Gartland danced wid *him*, and wouldn't go out wid *you*? Death alive, sure that wasn't *his* fault."

Every word of reproof which proceeded from Rody's lips but strengthened Frank's rage, and added to his sense of shame; he looked first in the direction of Reillaghan's house, and immediately towards the little village in which Peggy Gartland lived.

"Rody," said he, slapping him fiercely on the shoulder, "go in—I've—I've made up my mind upon what I'll do; go in, Rody, and get your dinner; but don't be out of the way when I come back."

"And what have you made up your mind to?" inquired Rody.

"Why, be the sacred Mother o' Heaven, Rody, to—to—be friends wid Mike."

"Ay, there's sinse and rason in that," replied Rody; "and if you'd take my advice, you'd give up Peggy Gartland too."

"I'll see you when I come back, Rody; don't be from about the place."

And as he spoke, a single spring brought him over the stile at which they held the foregoing conversation.

On advancing, he found himself in one of his father's fields, under the shelter of an elderh-edge. Here he paused, and seemed still somewhat uncertain as to the direction in which he should proceed. At length he

decided; the way towards Peggy Gartland's was that which he took, and as he walked rapidly, he soon found himself at the village in which she lived.

It was now a little after twilight; the night was clear, the moon being in her first quarter, and the clouds through which she appeared to struggle, were light and fleecy, but rather cold-looking; such, in short, as would seem to promise a sudden fall of snow. Frank had passed the two first cabins of the village, and was in the act of parrying the attacks of some yelping cur that assailed him, when he received a slap on the back, accompanied by a *gho manki Dhea ghud, a Franchas, co woul thu guilth a nish, a rogora dhu**?

"Who's this?" exclaimed Frank: "eh! why, Darby More, you suilin' thief o' the world, is this you?"

"Ay, indeed; an' you're goin' down to Peggy's?" said the other, pointing significantly towards Peggy Gartland's house. "Well, man, what's the harm? She may get worse, that is, hopin' still that you'll mend your manners, a bouchal: but isn't your nose out o' joint there, Frank, darlin'?"

"No sich thing at all, Darby," replied Frank, gulping down his indignation, which rose afresh on hearing that the terms on which he stood with Peggy were so notorious.

"Throth but it is," said Darby; "an' to tell the blessed throth, I'm not sarry that it's out o' joint; for when I tould you to lave the case in my hands, along wid a small thrifle o' silver that didn't signify much to you—whoo! not at all: you'd rather play it at cards, or dhrink it, or spind it wid no good. Out o' joint! masha, if ever a man's nose was to be pitied, and yours is: why, didn't Mike Beillaghan put it out o' joint, twiist? first in regard to Peggy, and secondly by the batin' he gave you an it."

"It's well known, Darby," replied Frank, "that 'twas by a chance blow he did it; and, you know, a chance blow might kill the devil."

"But there was no danger of Mike's *gottin'* the chance blow," observed the sarcastic vagrant, for such he was.

"Maybe it's afore him," replied his companion: "we'll have another thrial for it, any how; but where are you goin', Darby? Is it to the dance?"

"Me! Is it a man wid two holy ordhers an him†? No, no! I might go up, may be, as far as your father's, merely to see the family, only for the night that's in it; but I'm goin' to another frind's place to spind my Chris'mas, an', over an' above, I must go to the Midnight Mass. Frank, change your coorses, an' mend your life, an' don't be the talk o' the parish. Remember me to the family, an' say I'll see them soon."

"How long will you stop in the neighbourhood?" inquired Frank.

"Arrah why, acushla?" replied the mendicant, softening his language.

* God save you, Frank! Where are you going now, you black rogue?

† The religious orders, as they are termed, most commonly entered into by the peasantry, are those of the Scapular and St. Francis. The order of Jesus—or that of the Jesuits, is only entered into by the clergy and the higher lay classes.

"I might be wantin to see you some o' these days," said the other: "indeed, it's not unlikely, Darby; so don't go, any how, widout seein' me."

"Ah!" said Darby, "had you taken a fool's advice—but it can't be helped now—the harm's done, I doubt; how-an'-ever, for the matther o' that, may be I have as good as Peggy in my eye for you; by the same token, as the night's cold, warm your tooth, avick; there's waker wather nor this in Lough Macall. Sorra sup of it ever I keep for my own use at all, barrin' when I take a touch o' configuration in my bowels, or, may be, when I'm too long at my prayers; for, God help me, sure I'm but sthrivin', wid the help o' one thing an' another, to work out my salvation as well as I can! Your health, any how, an' a merry Christmas to you!—not forgettin' myself," he added, putting to his lips a large cow's horn, which he kept slung beneath his arm, like the bugle of a coach-guard, only that this was generally concealed by an outside coat, no two inches of which were of the same materials or colour. Having taken a tolerably large draught from this, which, by the way, held near two quarts, he handed it with a smack and a shrug to Frank, who immediately gave it a wipe with the skirt of his coat, and pledged his companion.

"I'll be wantin'," observed Frank, "to see you in the hollydays—faith, that stuff's to be christened yet, Darby—so don't go till we have a dish o' discourse about somethin' I'll mention to you. As for Peggy Gartland, I'm done wid her; she may marry ould Nick for me."

"Or you for ould Nick," said the cynic, "which would be nearly the same thing: but go an, avick, an' never heed me; sure I must have my spake—doesn't every body know Darby More?"

"I've nothin' else to say now," added Frank, "and you have my authority to spread it as far as you please. I'm done wid her: so good night, an' good cuttin'* to your horn, Darby!—You damn ould villian!" he subjoined in a low voice, when Darby had got out of his hearing: "surely it's not in yourself, but in the blessed words and things you have about you, that there is any good."

"Musha, good night, Frank, alanna," replied the other;—"an' the divil sweep you, for a skamin' vagabone, that's a curse to the country, and has kep me out o' more weddins than any one I ever met wid, by your roguery in puttin' evil between frinds an' neighbours, jist whin they'd be ready for the priest to say the words over them! Good won't come of you, you profligate."

The last words were scarcely uttered by the sturdy mendicant, when he turned round to observe whether or not Frank would stop at Larry Gartland's, the father of the girl to whom he had hitherto unsuccessfully avowed his attachment.

"I'd depend on him," said he, in a soliloquy, "as soon as I'd depend upon ice of an hour's growth: an', whether or not, sure as I'm an my way to Owen Reillaghan's, the father of the dacent boy that he's strivin' to outdo, mayn't I as well watch his motions, any way?"

* Good cuttin'—May what's in it never fail.

He accordingly proceeded along the shadowy side of the street, in order to avoid Frank's eye, should he chance to look back, and quietly dodged on until he fairly saw him enter the house.

Having satisfied himself that the object of Frank's visit to the village was in some shape connected with Peggy Gartland, the mendicant immediately retraced his steps, and at a pace more rapid than usual, strided on to Owen Reillaghan's, whither he arrived just in time to secure an excellent Christmas-eve dinner.

In Ireland, that description of mendicants which differ so strikingly from the common crowd of beggars as to constitute a distinct species, comprehends within itself as anomalous an admixture of fun and devotion, external rigour and private licentiousness, love of superstition and of good whiskey, as might naturally be supposed, without any great stretch of credulity, to belong to men thrown among a people in whom so many extremes of character and morals meet. The known beggar, who goes his own rounds, and has his own walk, always adapts his character to that of his benefactor, whose whims and peculiarities of temper he studies with industry, and generally with success. By this means, joined to a dexterity in tracing out the private history of families and individuals, he is enabled to humour the caprices, to manage the eccentricities, and to touch with a masterly hand the prejudices and particular opinions, of his patrons; and this he contrives to do with great address and tact. Such was the character of Darby More, whose person, naturally large, was increased to an enormous size by the number of coats, blankets, and bags, with which he was encumbered. A large belt, buckled round his body, contained within its girth much more of money, meal, and whiskey, than ever met the eye; his hat was exceedingly low in the crown; his legs were cast in at least three pairs of stockings; and in his hand he carried a long *cant*, spiked at the lower end, with which he slung himself over small rivers and dykes, and kept dogs at bay. He was a devotee, too, notwithstanding the whiskey horn under his arm; attended wakes, christenings, and weddings; rubbed for the *rose** and king's evil, (for the varlet insisted that he was a seventh son;) cured tooth-aches, colics, and head-aches, by charms; but made most money by a knack which he possessed of tatooing into the naked breast the representation of Christ upon the cross. This was a secret of considerable value, for many of the superstitious people believed that by having this stained in upon them, they would escape unnatural deaths, and be almost sure of heaven.

When Darby approached Reillaghan's house, he was considering the propriety of disclosing to his son the fact of his having left his rival with Peggy Gartland. He ultimately determined that it would be proper to do so; for he was shrewd enough to suspect that the wish Frank had expressed of seeing him before he left the country, was but a *ruse* to purchase his silence touching his appearance in the village. In this, however, he was mistaken.

"God save the house!" exclaimed Darby, on entering—"God save the house, an' all that's in it! God save it to the North!" and he formed

* A scrofulous swelling.

the sign of the cross in every direction to which he turned: "God save it to the South! + to the Aiste! + and to the Waiste! + Save it upwards! + and save it downwards! + Save it backwards! + and save it forwards! + Save it right! + and save it left! + Save it by night! + save it by day! + Save it here! + save it there! + Save it this way! + an' save it that way! + Save it atin'! + + + an' save it drinkin'! + + + + + Oxis Doxis Glorioxis—Amin. An' now that I've blessed the place in the name of the nine Patriarchs, how are yez all, man, woman, an' child? An' a merry Christmas to yez, says Darby More!"

Darby, in the usual spirit of Irish hospitality, received a sincere welcome, was placed up near the fire, a plate filled with the best food on the table laid before him, and requested to want nothing for the asking.

"Why, Darby," said Reillaghan, "we expected you long ago: why didn't you come sooner?"

"The Lord's will be done! for ev'ry man has his throubles," replied Darby, stuffing himself in the corner like an Epicure; "an' why should a sinner like me, or the likes o' me, be without thim? 'Twas a dhrame I had last night that kep me. They say, indeed, that dhrames go by contraries, but not always, to my own knowledge."

"An' what was the dhrame about, Darby?" inquired Reillaghan's wife.

"Why, Ma'am, about some that I see on this hearth, well, an' in good health; may they long live to be so! Oxis Doxis Glorioxis—Amin!" + + +

"Blessed Virgin! Darby, sure it would be nothin' bad that's to happen? Would it, Darby?"

"Keep yourself aisy on that head. I have widin my own mind the power of makin' it come out for good—I know the prayer for it. Oxis Doxis!" + +

"God be praised for that, Darby: sure it would be a terrible business, all out, if any thing was to happen. Here's Mike that was born on Whisele* Monday, of all days in the year, an', you know, they say that any child born on that day is to die an unnatural death. We named Mike after St. Michael that he might purtect him."

"Make yourself aisy, I say; don't I tell you I have the prayer to keep it back—hach! hach!—why, there's a bit stuck in my throath, some way! *Wurrah dhoolish*, what's this! Maybe, you could give me a sup o' dhrink—wather, or any thing to moisten the morsel I'm atin'? *Wurrah*, Ma'am dear, make haste, it's goin' agin the breath wid me!"

"Oh, the sorra taste o' wather, Darby," said Owen; "sure this is Christmas eve, you know; so you see, Darby, for ould acquaintance sake, an' that you may put up an odd prayer now an' thin for us, jist be thryin' this."

Darby honoured the gift by immediate acceptance.

* The people believe the superstition to be as is stated above. Any child born on Whitsunday, or the day after, is supposed to be doomed to die an unnatural death. The consequence is, that the child is named after and dedicated to some particular saint, in the hope that his influence may obviate his evil doom.

"Well, Owen Reillaghan," said he, "you make me take more o' this stuff nor any man I know; and particularly by rason that bein' given, wid a blessin', to the ranns, an' prayers, an' holy charms, I don't think it so good; barrin', indeed, as Father Dannellan towld me, when the wind, by long fastin', gets into my stomach, as was the case to-day, I'm often throubled, God help me, wid a configuration in the—hugh! ugh!—an' thin it's good for me—a little of it."

"This would make a brave powdher-horn, Darby More," observed one of Reillaghan's sons, "if it wasn't so big. What do you keep in it, Darby?"

"Why, *a villish*,* nothin' indeed but a sup o' Father Donnellan's holy wather, that they say by all accounts it costs him great trouble to make, by rason that he must fast a long time, and pray by the day, afore he gets himself holy enough to consecrate it."

"It smells like whisky, Darby," said the boy, without any intention, however, of offending him: "It smells very like *poteen*."

"Hould yer tongue, Risthard," said the elder Reillaghan; "what 'ud make the honest man have whisky in it? Didn't he tell you what's in it?"

"The gorsoon's right enough," replied Darby: "I got the horn from Barny Dalton a couple o' days agone; 'twas whisky *he* had in it, an' it smells of it sure enough, an' will, indeed, for some time longer. Och! och! the heavens be praised, I've made a good dinner! May they never know want that gave it to me! Oxis Doxis Glorioxis—Amin!" + + +

"Darby, thry this agin," said Reillaghan, offering him another bumper.

"Throth an' I will, thin, for I find myself a great dale the better or the one I tuck. Well, here's health an' happiness to us, an' may we all meet in heaven! Risthard, hand me that horn till I be goin' out to the barn, in ordher to do somethin' for my sowl. The holy wather's a good thing to have about one."

"But the dhrame, Darby?" inquired Mrs. Reillaghan. "Won't you tell it to us?"

"Let Mike follow me to the barn," he replied, "an' I'll tell him as much of it as he ought to hear. An' now let all of yez prepare for the Midnight Mass: go there wid proper intintions, an' not to be coortin' or dhrinkin' by the way. We're all sinners, any way, an' oughtn't to neglect our sowls. Oxis Doxis Glorioxis. Amin!"

He immediately strided with the horn under his arm, towards the barn, where he knelt, and began his orisons in a tone sufficiently loud to be heard in the kitchen.

When he was gone, Mrs. Reillaghan, who, with the curiosity natural to her sex, and the superstition peculiar to her station in life, felt anxious to hear Darby's dream, urged Mike to follow him forthwith, that he might prevail on him to detail it at full length.

Darby, who knew not exactly what the dream ought to be, replied to Mike's inquiries vaguely.

"Mike," said he, "antil the proper time comes, I can't tell it; but

* A villish—my sweet.

listen : take my advice, an' slip down to Peggy Gartland's by and by. I have strong suspicions, if my dhrame is throe, that Frank M'Kenna has a design upon her. People may be abroad this night widout bein' noticed, by rason o' the Midnight Mass ; Frank has friends in Kilnaheery, down behind the moors ; an' the devil might timplt him to bring her there. Keep your eye an him, or rather an Peggy. If my dhrame's true, he was there this night."

"I thought I gave him enough on her account," said Mike. "The poor girl hasn't a day's pace in regard of him ; but, plase Goodness, I'll soon put an end to it, for I'll marry her durin' the Hollydays."

"Go, avick, an' let me finish my *Pudheran Partha* : I have to get through it before the Midnight Mass comes. Slip down, and find out what he was doin' ; and when you come back, let me know."

Mike, perfectly aware of young M'Kenna's character, immediately went towards Lisdrum, for so the village where Peggy Gartland lived was called. He felt the danger to be apprehend'd from the interference of his rival the more acutely, inasmuch as he was not ignorant of the feuds and quarrels which the former had frequently produced between friends and neighbours, by the subtle poison of his falsehoods, which were both wanton and malicious. He therefore advanced at an unusually brisk pace, and had nearly reached the village, when he perceived in the distance a person resembling Frank approaching him at a pace nearly as rapid as his own.

"If it's Frank M'Kenna," thought he, "he must pass me, for this is his straight line home."

It appeared, however, that he had been mistaken ; for he whom he had supposed to be the object of his enmity, crossed the field by a different path, and seemed to be utterly ignorant of the person whom he was about to meet—so far, at least, as a quick, free, unembarrassed step could intimate his unacquaintance with him.

The fact, however, was, that Reillaghan, had the person whom he met approached him more nearly, would have found his first suspicions correct. Frank was then on his return from Gartland's, and no sooner perceived Reillaghan, whom he immediately recognised by his great height, than he took another path in order to avoid him. The enmity between these rivals was deep and implacable ; aggravated on the one hand by a sense of unmerited injury, and on the other by personal defeat and the bitterest jealousy. For this reason neither of them wished to meet, particularly Frank M'Kenna, who not only hated, but feared his enemy.

Having succeeded in avoiding Reillaghan, the latter soon reached home ; but here he found the door closed, and the family, without a single exception, in the barn, which was now nearly crowded with the youngsters of both sexes from the surrounding villages.

Frank's arrival among them gave a fresh impulse to their mirth and enjoyment. His manners were highly agreeable, and his spirits buoyant almost to levity. Notwithstanding the badness of his character in the opinion of the sober, steady, and respectable inhabitants of the parish, yet he was a favourite with the dissolute and thoughtless, and with many who had not an opportunity of seeing him except in his most favourable aspect.

Whether he entertained on this occasion any latent design that might have induced him to assume a frankness of manner, and an appearance of good-humour, which he did not feel, it is difficult to determine. Be this as it may, he made himself generally agreeable, saw that every one was comfortable, suggested an improvement in the arrangement of the seats, broke several jests on Barny and Granua Waile—which, however, were returned with interest—and, in fact, acquitted himself so creditably, that his father whispered with a sigh to his mother—

“Alley, achora, wouldn't we be the happy family if that misfortunate boy of ours was to be always the thing he appears to be? God help him! the gommach, if he had sinse, and the fear o' God before him, he'd not be sich a piece o' desate to sthrangers, and such a devil's limb wid ourselves: but he's young, an' may see his evil coorses in time, wid the help o' God.”

“Musha, may God grant it!” exclaimed his mother: “a fine slip he is, if his heart 'ud only turn to the right thoughts. One can't help feelin' pride out o' him, when they see him actiu' wid any kind o' rason.”

The Irish dance, like every other assembly composed of Irishmen and Irishwomen, presents the spectators with those traits which enter into our conception of rollicking fun and broad humour. The very arrangements are laughable; and when joined to the eccentric strains of some blind fiddler like Barny *Dhal*, to the grotesque and caricaturish faces of the men, and the modest, but evidently arch and laughter-loving countenances of the females, they cannot fail to impress an observing mind with the obvious truth, that a nation of people so thoughtless and easily directed from the serious and useful pursuits of life to such scenes, can seldom be industrious and wealthy, nor, despite their mirth and humour, a happy people.

The barn in which they danced on this occasion was a large one. Around the walls were placed as many seats as could be spared from the neighbours' houses; these were eked out by sacks of corn laid lengthwise, logs of round timber, old creels, iron pots with their bottoms turned up, and some of them in their usual position. On these were the youngsters seated, many of the “boys,” with their sweethearts on their knees, the arms of the fair ones lovingly around their necks; and, on the contrary, many of the young women with their bachelors on their laps, their own necks also gallantly encircled by the arms of their admirers. Up in a corner sat Barny, surrounded by the seniors of the village, sawing the fiddle with indefatigable vigour, and leading the conversation with equal spirit. Indeed, his laugh was the loudest, and his joke the best; whilst, ever and anon, his music became perfectly furious—that is to say, when he rasped the fiddle with a desperate effort “to overtake the dancers,” from whom, in the heat of the conversation, he had unwittingly lagged behind.

Dancing in Ireland, like everything else connected with the amusement of the people, is frequently productive of bloodshed. It is not unusual for crack dancers from opposite parishes, or from distant parts of the same parish, to meet and dance against each other for victory. But as the judges in those cases consist of the respective friends or factions of the champions, their mode of decision may readily be conjectured. Many a battle is fought in consequence of such challenges, the result usually being

that not he who has the lightest heel, but the hardest head, generally comes off the conqueror.

While the usual variety of Irish dances—the reel, jig, fling, three-part-reel, four-part-reel, rowly-powly, country-dance, *cotillion*, or cut-along (as the peasantry call it), and minuet, vulgarly minion, and minionet—were going forward in due rotation, our readers may be assured that those who were seated around the walls did not permit the time to pass without improving it. Many an attachment is formed at such amusements, and many a bitter jealousy is excited: the prude and coquette, the fop and rustic Lothario, stand out here as prominently to the eye of him who is acquainted with human nature, as they do in similar assemblies among the great: perhaps more so, as there is less art, and a more limited knowledge of intrigue, to conceal their natural character.

The dance in Ireland usually commences with those who sit next the door, from whence it goes round with the sun. In this manner it circulates two or three times, after which the order is generally departed from, and they dance according as they can. This neglect of the established rule is also a fertile source of discord; for when two persons rise at the same time, if there be not room for both, the right of dancing first is often decided by blows.

At the dance we are describing, however, there was no dissension; every heart appeared to be not only elated with mirth, but also free from resentment and jealousy. The din produced by the thumping of vigorous feet upon the floor, the noise of the fiddle, the chat between Barny and the little sober knot about him, together with the brisk murmur of the general conversation, and the expression of delight which sat on every countenance, had something in them elevating to the spirits.

Barny, who knew the voices, and even the mode of dancing peculiar to almost every one in the barn, had some joke for each. When a young man brings out his sweetheart—which he frequently does in a manner irresistibly ludicrous, sometimes giving a spring from the earth, his *caubeen* set with a knowing air on one side of his head, advancing at a trot on tip-toe, catching her by the ear, leading her out to her position, which is “to face the fiddler,” then ending by a snap of the fingers, and another spring, in which he brings his heel backwards in contact with his ham;—we say, when a young man brings out his sweetheart, and places her facing the fiddler, he asks her what she will dance; to which, if she has no favourite tune, she uniformly replies—“*Your will is my pleasure.*” This usually made Barny groan aloud.

“What ails you, Barny?”

“Oh, thin, murder alive, how little thruth’s in this world! Your will’s my pleasure! *Baithirshin!* but, sowl, if things goes an, it won’t be long so!”

“Why, Barny,” the young man would exclaim, “is the ravin’ fit comin’ over you?”

“No, in troth, Jim; but it’s thinkin’ of home I am. Howandiver, do you go an; but, *naboklish!* what’ll ye have?”

“‘Jig Polthouge,’ Barny: but oil your wrist a bouchal, or Katty will

lave us both out o' sight in no time. Whoo! success! clear the coorse. Well, done, Barny! That's the go."

When the youngsters had danced for some time, the fathers and mothers of the village were called upon "to step out." This was generally the most amusing scene in the dance. No excuse is ever taken on such occasions, for when they refuse, about a dozen young fellows place them, will they nil they, upright upon the floor, from whence neither themselves nor their wives are permitted to move until they dance. No sooner do they commence, than they are mischievously pitted against each other by two sham parties, one encouraging the wife, the other cheering on the good man; whilst the fiddler, falling in with the frolic, plays in his most furious style. The simplicity of character, and, perhaps, the lurking vanity of those who are the butts of the mirth on this occasion, frequently heighten the jest.

"Why thin, Paddy, is it strivin' to outdo me you are? Faika, avourneen, you never seen that day, any way," the old woman would exclaim, exerting all her vigour.

"Didn't I? Sowl, I'll sober you before I lave the flure, for all that," her husband would reply.

"An' do you forget," she would rejoin, "that the M'Carthy dthrop is in me; ay, an' it's to the good still."

And the old dame would accompany the boast with a fresh attempt at agility; to which Paddy would respond by "cutting the buckle," and snapping his fingers, whilst fifty voices, amidst roars of laughter, were loud in encouraging each.

"Handle your feet, Kitty, darlin'—the mettle's lavin' him!"

"Off wid the brogues, Paddy, or she'll do you. That's it; kick off the other, an' don't spare the flure."

"A thousand guineas an Katty! M'Carthy agin Gallagher for ever!—whirroo!"

"Blur alive the flure's not benefittin' by you, Paddy. Lay on it, man!—That's it!—Bravo!—Whish!—our side agin Europe!"

"Success, Paddy! Why you could dance the Dusty Miller upon a flure paved wid drawn razures, you're so soople."

"Katty for ever! The blood's in you, Katty; you'll win the day, a *ban choir!** More power to you!"

"I'll hould a quart on Paddy. Heel an' toe, Paddy, you sinner!"

"Right an' left, Katty; hould an', his breath's goin'."

"Right an' wrong, Paddy, you spalpeen. The whiskey's an you, man alive: do it decently, an' don't let me lose the wager."

In this manner would they incite some old man, and, perhaps, his older wife, to prolonged exertion, and keep them bobbing and jigging about amidst roars of laughter, until the worthy couple could dance no longer.

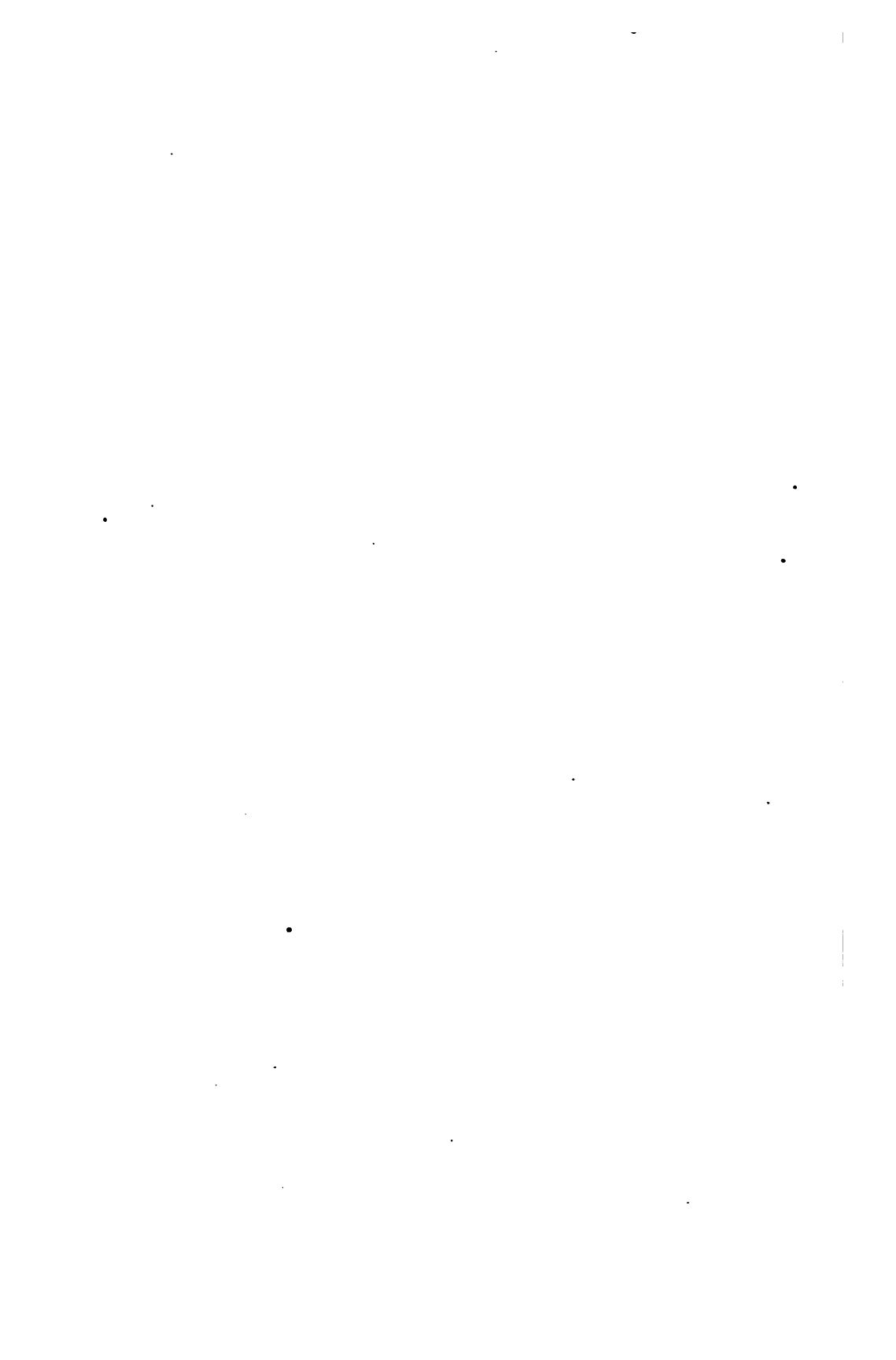
During stated periods of the night, those who took the most prominent part in the dance, got a plate and hat, with which they went round the youngsters, to make collections for the fiddler. Barny reserved his best

* Decent woman.



Handle your feet ... off with the Brogues ! Whinroo !

Whinroo Mass. 1872



and most sarcastic jokes for these occasions ; for so correct was his ear, that he felt little difficulty in detecting those whose contributions to him were such as he did not relish.

The aptitude of the Irish for enjoying humorous images was well displayed by one or two circumstances which occurred on this night. A few of both sexes, who had come rather late, could get no other seats than the metal pots to which we have alluded. The young women were dressed in white, and their companions, who were also their admirers, exhibited, in proud display, each a bran-new suit, consisting of broad-cloth coat, yellow-buff vest, and corduroy small-clothes, with a bunch of broad silk ribbons standing out at each knee. They were the sons and daughters of respectable farmers, but as all distinctions here entirely ceased, they were fain to rest contented with such seats as they could get, which on this occasion consisted of the pots aforesaid. No sooner, however, had they risen to dance, than the house was convulsed with laughter, heightened by the sturdy vigour with which, unconscious of their appearance, they continued to dance. That part of the white female dresses which had come in contact with the pots, exhibited a circle like the full moon, and was black as pitch. Nor were their partners more lucky : those who sat on the mouths of the pots had the back part of their dresses streaked with dark circles, equally ludicrous. The mad mirth with which they danced, in spite of their grotesque appearance, was irresistible. This, and other incidents quite as pleasant—such as the case of a wag who purposely sank himself into one of the pots, until it stuck to him through half the dance—increased the laughter, and disposed them to peace and cordiality.

No man took a more active part in these frolics than young Frank M'Kenna. It is true, a keen eye might have noticed under his gaiety something of a moody and dissatisfied air. As he moved about from time to time, he whispered something to above a dozen persons who were well-known in the country as his intimate companions, young fellows whose disposition and character were notoriously bad. When he communicated the whisper, a nod of assent was given by his confidants, after which it might be remarked that they moved round to the door with a caution that betrayed a fear of observation, and quietly slunk out of the barn one by one, though Frank himself did not immediately follow them. In about a quarter of an hour afterwards, Rody came in, gave him a signal, and sat down. Frank then followed his companions, and after a few minutes Rody also disappeared. This was about ten o'clock, and the dance was proceeding with great gaiety and animation.

Frank's dread of openly offending his parents prevented him from assembling his associates in the dwelling-house ; the only convenient place of rendezvous, therefore, of which they could avail themselves, was the stable. Here they met, and Frank, after uncorking a bottle of poteen, addressed them to the following effect :

“ Boys, there's great excuse for me, in regard of my fight wid Mike Reillaghan ; that you'll all allow. Come, boys, your healths ! I can tell yez you'll find this good, the divil a doubt of it ; be the same token, that I stole it from my father's Christmas dhrink ; but no matter for

that—I hope we'll never do worse. So, as I was sayin' you must bear me out as well as you can, when I'm brought before the Dillegates to-morrow, for challengin' and strikin' a brother.* But, I think, you'll stand by me, boys?"

"By the tarn-o'-war, Frank, myself will fight to the knees for you."

"Faith, you may depend on us, Frank, or we're not to the fore."

"I know it, boys: and now for a piece of fun for this night. You see—come, Lanty, tare-an'-ounkers, drink, man alive—you see wid regard to Peggy Gartland—eh? what the hell! is that a cough?"

"One o' the horses, man—go an."

"Rody, did Darby More go into the barn before you came out of it?"

"Darby More? not he. If he did, I'd a seen him surely."

"Why, thin, I'd kiss the book I seen him goin' towards the barn, as I was comin' into the stable. Sowl, he's a made boy, that; an' if I don't mistake, he's in Mike Reillaghan's intherest. You know devil a secret can escape him."

"Hut! the prayin' ould crathur was on his way to the Midnight Mass; he thravels slow, and, of coorse, has to set out early; besides, you know, he has Carols, and bades, and the likes, to sell at the chapel."

"Thru for you, Rody: why, I thought he might take it into his head to watch my motions, in regard that, as I said, I think him in Mike's intherest."

"Nonsense, man, what the dickens 'ud bring him into the stable loft? Why, you're beside yourself!"

"Be Gor, I bleeve so, but no matter. Boys, I want yez to stand to me to-night: I'm given to know for a sartinty that Mike and Peggy will be buckled to durin' the Hollydays. Now, I wish to get the girl myself; for if I don't get her, may I be ground to atoms if he will."

"Well, but how will you manage? for she's fond of him."

"Why, I'll tell you that. I was over there this evenin', and I understand that all the family is goin' to the Midnight Mass, barrin' herself. You see, while they are all gone to the 'mallet-office,' † we'll slip down wid a thrife o' soot on our mugs, and walk down wid her to Kilnaheery, beyant the mountains, to an uncle's o' mine; an' ather that, let any man marry her who chooses to run the risk. Be the contints o' the book, Atty, if you don't dhrink I'll knock your head agin the wall, you gommoch!"

"Why, thin, by all that's beautiful, it's a good spree; and we'll stick to you like pitch."

"Be the vartue o' my oath, you don't deserve to be in it, or you'd dhrink dacent. Why, here's another bottle, an' maybe there's more where that was. Well, let us finish what we have, or be the five crasses, I'll give up the whole business."

"Why, thin, here's success to us, any way; an' high hangin' to them that 'ud desert you in your skame this blessed an' holy night that's in it!"

* Those connected with illegal combinations are sworn to have no private or personal quarrels, nor to strike, nor provoke each other to fight. He and Mike were members of such societies.

† Mass, humourously so called from the fact of those who attend it beating their breasts during their devotions.

This was re-echoed by his friends, who pledged themselves by the most solemn oaths not to abandon him in the perpetration of the outrage which they had concerted. The other bottle was immediately opened, and while it lasted, the details of the plan were explained at full length. This over, they entered the barn one by one as before, except Frank and Rody, who as they were determined to steal another bottle from the father's stock, did not appear among the dancers until this was accomplished.

The re-appearance of these rollicking and reckless young fellows in the dance, was hailed by all present; for their outrageous mirth was in character with the genius of the place. The dance went on with spirit; brag dancers were called upon to exhibit in hornpipes; and for this purpose a table was brought in from Frank's kitchen, on which they performed in succession, each dancer applauded by his respective party as the best in the barn.

In the meantime the night had advanced; the hour might be about half-past ten o'clock; all were in the zenith of enjoyment, when old Frank M'Kenna addressed them as follows:—

“ Neighbours, the dickens o' one o' me would like to break up the sport —an', in throth, harmless and dacent sport it is; but you all know that this is Christmas night, and that it's our duty to attend the Midnight Mass. Any body that likes to hear it may go, for it's near time to be home an' prepare for it; but the sorra one o' me wants to take any of yez from your sport, if you prefer it; all I say is, that I must lave yez; so God be wid yez till we meet agin!”

This short speech produced a general bustle in the barn; many of the elderly neighbours left it, and several of the young persons also. It was Christmas Eve, and the Midnight Mass had from time immemorial so strong a hold upon their prejudices and affections, that the temptation must indeed have been great which would have prevented them from attending it. When old Frank went out, about one-third of those who were present left the dance along with him; and as the hour for mass was approaching, they lost no time in preparing for it.

The Midnight Mass is, no doubt, a phrase familiar to our Irish readers; but we doubt whether those in the sister kingdoms, who may honour our book with a perusal, would, without a more particular description, clearly understand it.

This ceremony was performed as a commemoration not only of the night, but of the hour in which Christ was born. To connect it either with edification, or the abuse of religion, would be invidious; so we overlook that, and describe it as it existed within our own memory, remarking, by the way, that though now generally discontinued, it is in some parts of Ireland still observed, or has been till within a few years ago.

The parish in which the scene of this story is laid was large, consequently the attendance of the people was proportionably great. On Christmas day a Roman Catholic priest has, or is said to have, the privilege of saying *three* masses, though on every other day in the year he can celebrate but two. Each priest, then, said one at midnight, and two on the following day.

Accordingly, about twenty or thirty years ago, the performance of the

Midnight Mass was looked upon as an ordinance highly important and interesting. The preparations for it were general and fervent; so much so, that not a Roman Catholic family slept till they heard it. It is true it only occurred once a year; but had any person who saw it *once* been called upon to describe it, he would say that religion could scarcely present a scene so wild and striking.

The night in question was very dark, for the moon had long disappeared, and as the inhabitants of the whole parish were to meet in one spot, it may be supposed that the difficulty was very great, of traversing, in the darkness of midnight, the space between their respective residences, and the place appointed by the priest for the celebration of mass. This difficulty they contrived to surmount. From about eleven at night till twelve or one o'clock, the parish presented a scene singularly picturesque, and, to a person unacquainted with its causes, altogether mysterious. Over the surface of the surrounding country were scattered myriads of blazing torches, all converging to one point; whilst at a distance, in the central part of the parish, which lay in a valley, might be seen a broad focus of red light, quite stationary, with which one or more of the torches that moved across the fields mingled every moment. These torches were of bog-fir, dried and split for the occasion; all persons were accordingly furnished with them, and by their blaze contrived to make way across the country with comparative ease. This Mass having been especially associated with festivity and enjoyment, was always attended by such excessive numbers, that the ceremony was in most parishes celebrated in the open air, if the weather were at all favourable. Altogether, as we have said, the appearance of the country at this dead hour of the night, was wild and impressive. Being Christmas every heart was up, and every pocket replenished with money, if it could at all be procured. This general elevation of spirits was no where more remarkable than in contemplating the thousands of both sexes, old and young, each furnished, as before said, with a blazing flambeau of bog-fir, all streaming down the mountain sides, along the roads, or across the fields, and settling at last into one broad sheet of fire. Many a loud laugh might then be heard ringing the night echo into reverberation; mirthful was the gabble in hard guttural Irish; and now and then a song from some one whose potations had been rather copious, would rise on the night-breeze, to which a chorus was subjoined by a dozen voices from the neighbouring groups.

On passing the shebeen and public-houses, the din of mingled voices that issued from them was highly amusing, made up, as it was, of songs, loud talk, rioting, and laughter, with an occasional sound of weeping from some one who had become penitent in his drink. In the larger public-houses—for in Ireland there usually are one or two of these in the immediate vicinity of each chapel—family parties were assembled, who set in to carouse both before and after mass. Those, however, who had any love affair on hands generally selected the shebeen house, as being private, and less calculated to expose them to general observation. As a matter of course, these jovial orgies frequently produced such disastrous consequences, both to human life and female reputation, that the intrigues between the sexes, the quarrels, and violent deaths resulting from them,

ultimately occasioned the discontinuance of a ceremony which was only productive of evil. To this day it is an opinion among the peasantry in many parts of Ireland, that there is something unfortunate connected with all drinking bouts held upon Christmas Eve. Such a prejudice naturally arises from a recollection of the calamities which so frequently befel many individuals while Midnight Masses were in the habit of being generally celebrated, although it is not attributed to their existence.

None of Frank M'Kenna's family attended mass but himself and his wife. His children, having been bound by all the rules of courtesy to do the honours of the dance, could not absent themselves from it; nor, indeed, were they disposed to do so. Frank, however, and his "good woman," carried their torches, and joined the crowds which flocked to this scene of fun and devotion.

When they had arrived at the cross-roads beside which the chapel was situated, the first object that presented itself so prominently as to attract observation was Darby More, dressed out in all his paraphernalia of blanket and horn, in addition to which he held in his hand an immense torch, formed into the figure of a cross. He was seated upon a stone, surrounded by a ring of old men and women, to whom he sang and sold a variety of Christmas Carols, many of them rare curiosities in their way, inasmuch as they were his own composition. A little beyond them stood Mike Reillaghan and Peggy Gartland, towards both of whom he cast from time to time a glance of latent humour and triumph. He did not simply confine himself to singing his carols; but, during the pauses of the melody, addressed the wondering and attentive crowd as follows:—

"Good Christians—This is the day—howandiver, it's night now, glory be to God—that the angel Lucifer appeared to Shud'orth, Mee-shach an' To-bed-we-go, in the village of Constantinople, near Jerooslem. The heavens be praised for it, 'twas a blessed an' holy *night*, an' remains so from that *day* to this—Oxis doxis glorioxis, Amin! Well; the sarra one of him but appeared to thim at the hour o' midnight, but they were asleep at the time, you see, and didn't persave him. So wid that he pulled out a horn like mine—an', by the same token, it's lucky to wear horns about one from that day to this—an' he put it to his lips, an' *tuck* a good dacent—I mane, *gave* a good dacent blast that soon roused them. 'Are yez asleep?' says he, when they awoke: 'why then, bud-an'-age!' says he, 'isn't it a burnin' shame for able stout fellows like yez to be asleep at the hour o' midnight of all hours o' the night. Tare-an-age!' says he, 'get up wid yez, you dirty spalpeens! There's St. Patrick in Jerooslem beyant; the Pope's signin' his mittimus to Ireland, to bless it in regard that neither corn, nor barley, nor phaties will grow an the land in quensequence of a set of varmint called *Black-slugs* that ates it up; an' there's not a glass o' whiskey to be had in Ireland for love or money,' says Lucifer. 'Get up wid yez,' says he, 'an' go in an' get his blessin'; sure there's not a Catholic in the counthry, barrin' Swaddlers, but's in the town by this,' says he: 'ay, an' many of the Protestants themselves, and the *Black-mouths*, an' *Blue-bellies**, are gone in to get a share of it. And now,

* Different denominations of Dissenters.

says he, 'bekase you wor so heavy-headed, I ordher it from this out, that the present night is to be observed in the Catholic church all over the world, an' must be kept holy; an' no thrue Catholic ever will miss from this pariod an opportunity of bein' awake at midnight,' says he, 'glory be to God!' An' now, good Christians, you have an account o' the blessed Carol I was singin' for yez. They're but hapuns a-piece; an' any body that has the grace to keep one o' theses about them, will never meet wid sudden deaths or accidents, sich as hangin', or drownin', or bein' taken suddenly wid a configuration inwardly. I wanst knew a holy man that had a dhrame—about a friend of his, it was—Will any of yez take one?—Thank you, a colleen: my blessin', the blessin' o' the pilgrim, be an you! God bless you, Mike Reillaghan; an' I'm proud that he put it into *your* heart to buy one for the reasons you know. An' now that Father Hoolaghan's comin', any of yez that 'ill want them 'ill find me there agin when mass is over—Oxis doxis gloriouis, Amin!"

The priest at this time made his appearance, and those who had been assembled on the cross-roads joined the crowd at the chapel. No sooner was it bruited among them that their pastor had arrived, than the noise, gabble, singing, and laughing were immediately hushed; the shebeen and public-houses were left untenanted; and all flocked to the chapel-green, where mass was to be said, as the crowd was too large to be contained within the small chapel.

Mike Reillaghan and Peggy Gartland were among the last who sought the "green;" as lovers, they probably preferred walking apart, to the inconvenience of being jostled by the multitude. As they sauntered on slowly after the rest, Mike felt himself touched on the shoulder, and on turning round found Darby More beside him.

"It's painful to my feelins," observed the mendicant, "to have to say this blessed night that your father's son should act so shabby an' ondacent."

"Saints above! how, Darby?"

"Why, don't you know that only for me—for what I heard, an what I tould you—you'd not have the purty girl here at your elbow? Wasn't it, as I said, his intintion to come and whip down the colleen to Kilnaheery while the family 'ud be at mass, sure only for this, I say, you bosthooan, an' that I made you bring her to mass, where 'ud the purty colleen be? why half way to Kilnaheery, an' the girl disgraced for ever!"

"Thru for you, Darby, I grant it: but what do you want me to do?"

"Oh, for that matther, nothin' at all, Mike; only I suppose that when your tailor made the clothes an you, he put no pockets to them?"

"Oh, I see where you are, Darby! well, here's a crown for you; an' when Peggy an' I's made man and wife, you'll get another."

"Mike, achora, I see you *are* your father's son still; now listen to me: first, you needn't fear sudden death while you keep that blessed Carol about you; next, get your friends together goin' home, for Frank might jist take the liberty, wid about a score of his 'boys,' to lift her from you even thin. Do the thing I say—don't thrust him; an' moreover, watch in her father's house to-night wid your friends. Thirdly, make it up wid Frank; there 's an oath upon you both, *you persave*? Make it up wid him, if he axes you: don't have a broken oath upon you; for if you



Darby More at his devotions.

Illustration from the book 'The Life of Darby More'.

refuse, he 'll put you out o' connexion *, an' that 'ud plase him to the back-bone."

Mike felt the truth and shrewdness of this advice, and determined to follow it. Both young men had been members of an illegal society, and in yielding to their passions so far as to assault each other, had been guilty of perjury. The following Christmas-day had been appointed by their parish Delegates to take the quarrel into consideration; and the best means of escaping censure was certainly to express regret for what had occurred, and to terminate the hostility by an amicable adjustment of their disputes.

They had now reached the chapel-green, where the scene that presented itself was so striking and strange, that we will give the reader an imperfect sketch of its appearance. He who stood at midnight upon a little mount which rose behind the chapel, might see between five and six thousand torches, all blazing together, and forming a level mass of red dusky light, burning against the dark horizon. These torches were so close to each other that their light seemed to blend, as if they had constituted one wide surface of flame; and nothing could be more preternatural-looking than the striking and devotional countenances of those who were assembled at their midnight worship, when observed beneath this canopy of fire. The Mass was performed under the open sky, upon a table covered with the sacrificial linen, and other apparatus for the ceremony. The priest stood, robed in white, with two large torches on each side of his book, reciting the prayers in a low, rapid voice, his hands raised, whilst the congregation were hushed and bent forward in the reverential silence of devotion, their faces touched by the strong blaze of the torches into an expression of deep solemnity. The scenery about the place was wild and striking; and the stars, scattered thinly over the heavens, twinkled with a faint religious light, that blended well with the solemnity of this extraordinary worship, and rendered the rugged nature of the abrupt cliffs and precipices, together with the still outline of the stern mountains, sufficiently visible to add to the wildness and singularity of the ceremony. In fact, there was an unearthly character about it; and the spectre-like appearance of the white-robed priest as he

"Muttered his prayer to the midnight air,"

would almost impress a man with the belief that it was a meeting of the dead, and that the priest was repeating, like the Grey Friar, his

"Mass of the days that were gone."

On the ceremony being concluded, the scene, however, was instantly changed: the lights were waved and scattered promiscuously among each other, giving an idea of confusion and hurry that was strongly contrasted with the death-like stillness that prevailed a few minutes before. The gabble and laugh were again heard loud and hearty, and the public and shebeen houses once more became crowded. Many of the young people made, on these occasions, what is called "a runaway †;" and other peccadilloes took place, for which the delinquents were "either read out from the altar," or sent probably to St. Patrick's Purgatory at Lough

* That is, out of connexion with Ribbonism.

† Rustic elopement.

Derg, to do penance. Those who did not choose to stop in the whisky-houses now hurried home with all speed, to take some sleep before early Mass, which was to be performed the next morning about day-break. The same number of lights might therefore be seen streaming in different ways over the parish; the married men holding the torches, and leading their wives; bachelors escorting their sweethearts, and not unfrequently extinguishing their flambeaus, that the dependence of the females upon their care and protection might more lovingly call forth their gallantry.

When Mike Reillaghan considered with due attention the hint which Darby More had given him, touching the necessity of collecting his friends as an escort for Peggy Gartland, he had strong reasons to admit its justness and propriety. After Mass he spoke to about two dozen young fellows who joined him, and under their protection Peggy now returned safely to her father's house.

Frank M'Kenna and his wife reached home about two o'clock; the dance was comparatively thin, though still kept up with considerable spirit. Having solemnised himself by the grace of so sacred a rite, Frank thought proper to close the amusement, and recommend those whom he found in the barn to return to their respective dwellings.

"You have had a merry night, childher," said he; "but too much o' one thing's good for nothin'; so don't make a toil of a pleasure, but go all home dacently an' soberly, in the name o' God."

This advice was accordingly followed. The youngsters separated, and M'Kenna joined his family, "to have a sup along wid them an' Barny, in honour of what they had hard." It was upon this occasion he missed his son Frank, whose absence from the dance he had not noticed since his return until then.

"Musha, where's Frank?" he inquired: "I'll warrant him, away wid his blackguards upon no good. God look down upon him! Many a black heart has that boy left us! If it's not the will o' heaven, I fear he'll come to no good. Barny, is he long gone from the dance?"

"Troth, Frank, wid the noise an' dancin', an' me bein' *dark*," replied Barny, shrewdly, "I can't take an me to say. For all you spake agin him, the sorra one of him but's a clane, dacent, spirited boy, as there is widin a great ways of him. Here's all your healths! Faix, girls, you'll all sleep sound to-night."

"Well," said Mrs. M'Kenna, "the knowledge of that Darby More is unknowable! Here's a Carol I bought from him, an' if you wor but to hear the explanations he put to it! Why Father Hoolaghan could hardly outdo him!"

"Divil a man in the five parishes can dance 'Jig Polthogue' wid him, for all that," said Barny. "Many a time Granua an' I played it for him, an' you'd know the tune upon his feet. He undherstands a power o' ranns an' prayers, an' has charms an' holy herbs for all kinds of ailments, no doubt."

"These men, you see," observed Mrs. M'Kenna, in the true spirit of credulity and superstition, "may do many things that the likes of us oughtn't to do, by rason of their great fastin' an' prayin'."

"Thrus for you, Alley," replied her husband: "but come, let us have

a sup more in comfort : the sleep's gone *a shraugran* an us this night, any way, so, Barny, give us a song, an' ather that we'll have a taste o' prayers, to close the night."

"But you don't think of the long journey I've before me," replied Barny : "howandiver, if you promise to send some one home wid me, we'll have the song. I wouldn't care, but the night bein' dark, you see, I'll want somebody to guide me."

"Faith, an' it's but rasonable, Barny, an' you must get Rody home wid you. I suppose he's asleep in his bed by this, but we'll rouse him !"

Barny replied by a loud triumphant laugh, for this was one of his standing jests.

"Well, Frank," said he, "I never thought you war so soft, an' mo can pick my steps the same at night as in daylight ! Sure that's the way I *done* them to-night, when one o' Granua's strings broke. 'Sweets o' rosin,' says I ; 'a candle—bring me a candle immedintly.' An' down came Rody in all haste wid a candle. 'Six eggs to you, Rody,' says myself, 'an' half-a-dozen o' them rotten ! but you're a bright boy, to bring a lit candle to a blind man !' and then he stood a *bouloare* to the whole house—ha, ha, ha !"

Barny, who was not the man to rise first from the whisky, commenced the relation of his choicest anecdotes ; old Frank and the family, being now in a truly genial mood, entered into the spirit of his jests, so that between chat, songs, and whisky, the hour had now advanced to four o'clock. The fiddler was commencing another song, when the dool opened, and Frank presented himself, nearly, but not altogether in a state of intoxication ; his face was besmeared with blood ; and his whole appearance that of a man under the influence of strong passion, such as would seem to be produced by disappointment and defeat.

"What !" said the father ; "is it snowin' Frank ? Your clothes are covered wid snow !"

"Lord, guard us !" exclaimed the mother, "is that blood upon your face, Frank ?"

"It *is* snowin', and it *is* blood that's upon my face," answered Frank, moodily—"do you want to know more news ?"

"Why, ay indeed," replied his mother, "we want to hear how you came to be cut ?"

"You won't hear it, thin," he replied.

The mother was silent, for she knew the terrible fits of passion to which he was subject.

The father groaned deeply, and exclaimed—"Frank, Frank, God help you, an' show you the sins you're committin', an' the heart-scaldin' you're givin' both your mother and me ! What fresh skrimmage had you that you're in that state ?"

"Spare yourself the tbrouble of inquirin'," he replied : "all I can say," he continued, starting up into sudden fury—"all I can say, an' I say it—I swear it—where's the prayer-book ?" and he ran frantically to a shelf beside the dresser on which the prayer-book lay,—"ay ! by him that made me I'll sware it—by this sacred book, while I live, Mike Reillaghan, the husband of Peggy Gartland you'll never be, if I should swing

for it! Now you all seen I kissed the book!" As he spoke, he tossed it back upon the shelf.

The mirth that had prevailed in the family was immediately hushed, and a dead silence ensued; Frank sat down, but instantly rose again, and flung the chair from him with such violence that it was crashed to pieces, he muttered oaths and curses, ground his teeth, and betrayed all the symptoms of jealousy, hatred, and disappointment.

"Frank, abouchal," said Barny, commencing to address him in a conciliatory tone—"Frank, man alive"——

"Hould your tongue, I say, you blind vagabone, or by the night above us, I'll break your fiddle over your skull, if you dar to say another word. What I swore I'll do, an' let no one crass me."

He was a powerful young man, and such was his temper, and so well was it understood, that not one of the family durst venture a word of remonstrance.

The father rose, went to the door, and returned. "Barny," said he, "you must contint yourself where you are for this night. It's snowin' heavily, so you had betther sleep wid Rody; I see a light in the barn, I suppose he's after bringin' in his bed an' makin' it."

"I'll do any thing," replied the poor fiddler, now apprehensive of violence from the outrageous temper of young Frank.

"Well, thin," added the good man, "let us all go to bed, in the name of God. Micaul, bring Barny to the barn, and see that he's comfortable."

This was complied with, and the family quietly and timidly retired to rest, leaving the violent young man storming and digesting his passion, behind them.

Mass on Christmas morning was then, as now, performed at day-break, and again the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the parish were up betimes to attend it. Frank M'Kenna's family were assembled, notwithstanding their short sleep, at an early breakfast; but their meal, in consequence of the unpleasant sensation produced by the outrage of their son, was less cheerful than it would otherwise have been. Perhaps, too, the gloom which hung over them, was increased by the snow that had fallen the night before, and by the wintry character of the day, which was such as to mar much of their expected enjoyment. There was no allusion made to their son's violence over-night; neither did he himself appear to be in any degree affected by it. When breakfast was over, they prepared to attend mass, and, what was unusual, young Frank was the first to set out for the chapel.

"Maybe," said the father, after he was gone—"maybe that fool of a boy is sarry for his behaviour. It's many a day since I knew him to go to mass of his own accord. It's a good sign, any way."

"Musha," inquired his mother, "what could happen atween him an' that civil boy, Mike Reillaghan?"

"The sorra one o' me knows," replied his father; "an' now that I think of it, sure enough there was none o' them at the dance last night, although I sent himself down for them. Micaul," he added, addressing the other son, "will you put an your big coat, slip down to Reillaghan's,

an' bring me word what came atween them at all; an' tell Owen himself the thruth, that this boy's brakin' our hearts by his coorses."

Micaul, who, although he knew the cause of the enmity between these rivals, was ignorant of that which occasioned his brother's rash oath, also felt anxious to ascertain the circumstances of the last quarrel. For this purpose, as well as in obedience to his father's wishes, he proceeded to Reillaghan's, and arrived just as Darby More and young Mike had set out for mass.

"What," said the mendicant, "can be bringin' Micaul down, I wonder? somethin' about that slip o' grace, his brother."

"I suppose so," said Mike; "an' I wish the same slip was as decent an' inoffensive as he is. I don't know a boy livin' I'd go farther for nor the same Micaul. He's a credit to the family as much as the other's a stain upon them."

"Well, any how, you war Frank's match, an' more, last night. How bittler he was bint on bringin' Peggy aff, when he an' his set waited till they seen the country clear, an' thought the family asleep! Had you man for man, Mike?"

"Ay, about that; an' we sat so snug in Peggy's that you'd hear a pin fallin'. A hard tug, too, there was in the beginnin'; but whin they found that we had a strong back, they made away, an' we gave them purshute from about the house."

"You may thank me, any how, for havin' her to the good; but I knew by my dhrame, wid the help o' God, that there was somethin' to happen; by the same a token, that your mother's an her high horse about that dhrame. I'm to tell it to her, wid the sinse of it, in the evenin', when the day's past, an' all of us in comfort."

"What was it, Darby? sure you may let me hear it."

"Maybe I will in the evenin'. It was about you an' Peggy, the darlin'. But how will you manage in regard of brakin' the oath, an' sthrikin' a brother."

"Why, that I couldn't get over it, when he sthruck me first: sure he's worse off. I'll lave it to the Dilegates, an' whatever judgment they give out, I'll take wid it."

"Well," observed Darby, sarcastically, "it made him do one good turn, any way."

"What was that, Darby? for good turns are but scarce wid him."

"Why, it made him hear mass to-day," replied the mendicant; "an' that's what he hadn't the grace to do this many a year. It's away in the mountains wid his gun he'd be, thracin', an' a fine day it is for it—only this business prevints him. Now, Mike," observed Darby, "as we're comin' out upon the *boreen*, I'll fall back, an' do you go an: I have part of my *padareens* to say, before I get to the chapel, wid a blessin'; an' we had as good not be seen together."

The mendicant, as he spoke, pulled out a long pair of beads, on which he commenced his prayers, occasionally accosting an acquaintance with a *Gho mhany Deah ghud*,* and sometimes taking a part in the conversation for a minute or two, after which he resumed the prayers as before.

* God save you!

The day was now brightening up, although the earlier part of the morning had threatened severe weather. Multitudes were flocking to the chapel; the men well secured in frieze great-coats, in addition to which, many of them had their legs bound with straw ropes, and others with leggings made of old hats, cut up for the purpose. The women were secured with cloaks, the hoods of which were tied with kerchiefs of some showy colour over their bonnets or their caps, which, together with their elbows projecting behind, for the purpose of preventing their dress from being dabbled in the snow, gave them a marked and most picturesque appearance.

Reillaghan and M'Kenna both reached the chapel a considerable time before the arrival of the priest; and as a kind of Whiteboy committee was to sit for the purpose of investigating their conduct in holding out so dangerous an example as they did, by striking each other, contrary to their oaths as brothers under the same system, they accordingly were occupied each in collecting his friends, and conciliating those whom they supposed to be hostile to them on the opposite party. It had been previously arranged that this committee should hold a court of inquiry, and that, provided they could not agree, the matter was to be referred to two hedge-schoolmasters, who should act as umpires; but if it happened that the latter could not decide it, there was no other tribunal appointed to which a final appeal could be made.

According to these regulations, a court was opened in a shebeen-house, that stood somewhat distant from the road. Twelve young fellows seated themselves on each side of a deal table, with one of the umpires at each end of it, and a bottle of whisky in the middle. In a higher sphere of life it is usual to refer such questionable conduct as occurs in duelling, to the arbitration of those who are known to be qualified by experience in the duello. On this occasion the practice was not much departed from, those who had been thus selected as the committee being the most notoriously pugnacious "boys" in the whole parish.

"Now, boys," said one of the schoolmasters, "let us proceed to operations wid proper spirit," and he filled a glass of whisky as he spoke. "Here's all your healths, and next, pace and unanimity to us! Call in the culprits."

Both were accordingly admitted, and the first speaker resumed—"Now, in the second place, I'll read yez that part of the oath which binds us all under the obligation of not strikin' one another—hem! hem! 'No brother is to strike another, knowing him to be such; he's to strike him—hem!—neither in fair nor market, at home nor abroad, neither in public nor in private, neither on Sunday nor week-day, present or absent, nor—'"

"I condimn that," observed the other master—"I condimn it, as bein' too latitudinarian in principle, an' containing a paradogma; besides it's bad grammar."

"You re rather airy in the market wid your bad grammar," replied the other; "I'll grant you the paradogma, but I'll stand up for the grammar of it, while I'm able to stand up for anything."

"Faith, an' if you rise to stand up for that," replied his friend, "and

doesn't choose to sit down till you prove it to be good grammar, you 'll be a standin' joke all your life."

"I bleeve it's purty conspicuous in the parish, that I have, often in our disputations about grammar, left you widout a leg to stand upon at all," replied the other.

This sally was well received, but his opponent was determined to push home the argument at once.

"I would be glad to know," he inquired, "by what beautiful invention a man could contrive to strike another in his *absence*? Have you good grammar for *that*?"

"And did you never hear of detraction?" replied his opponent; "that is, a man who's in the habit of spakin' falsehoods of his friends whin their backs are turned—that is to say, whin they are absent. Now, sure, if a man's absent whin his back's turned, mayn't any man whose back's turned be said to be absent—ergo, to strike a man behind his back is to strike him whin he's absent. Does that confound you? where's your logic and grammar to meet proper ratiocination like what I'm displaying?"

"Faith," replied the other, "you may have had logic and grammar, but I'll take my oath it was in your younger years, for both have been *absent* ever since I knew you: they turned their *backs* upon you, man alive; for they didn't like, you see, to be keepin' bad company—ha, ha, ha!"

"Why, you poor cratur," said his antagonist, "if I'd choose to let myself out, I could make a hare of you in no time entirely."

"And an ass of yourself," retorted the other: "but you may save yourself the throuble in regard of the last, for your frinds know you to be an ass ever since they remember you. You have them here, man alive, the auricles," and he pointed to his ears.

"Hut! get out wid you, you poor Jamaica-headed castigator, you; sure you never had more nor a thimble-full o' sinse on any subject."

"Faith, an' the thimble that measured yours was a tailor's, one widout a bottom in it, an' good measure you got, you miserable flageſtator! what are you but a *nux vomica*? A fit of the ague's a thrife compared to your asinity."

The "boys" were delighted at this encounter, and utterly forgetful of the pacific occasion on which they had assembled, began to pit them against each other with great glee.

"That's a hard hit, Misther Costigan; but you won't let it pass, any how."

"The ague an' you are ould acquaintances," retorted Costigan; "whenever a skrimmage takes place, you're sure to resave a visit from it."

"Why, I'm not such a hare as yourself," replied his rival, "nor such a great hand at batin' the *absent*—ha, ha, ha!"

"Bravo, Misther Connell—that's a leveller; come, Misther Costigan, bedad, if you don't answer that you're bate."

"By this and by that, man alive, if you don't mend your manners, maybe I'd make it betther for you to be absent also. You'll only put *me* to the throuble of mendin' them *for* you."

"Mend my manners!" exclaimed his opponent, with a bitter sneer,—
"you to mend them! ont wid your budget and your hammer, then; you're the very tinker of good manners—bekase for one dacency you'd mend, you'd spoil twenty."

"I'm able to hammer you at all events, or, for that matther, any one of your illiterate gination. Sure it's well known that you can't tach Voshtther (Voster) widout the Kay."

"Hould there, if you plase," exclaimed one of his opponent's relations; "don't lug in *his family*; *that's* known to be somewhat afore your own, I bleeve. There's no *Informers* among them, Misther Costigan: keep at home, masther, if you plase."

"At *home*! That's more than some o' your own *cleaveens** have been able to do," rejoined Costigan, alluding to one of the young fellow's acquaintances who had been transported.

"Do you mane to put an affront upon me?" said the other.

"Since the *barrhad* † fits you, wear it," replied Costigan.

"Very right, masther, make him a present of it," exclaimed one of Costigan's distant relations; "he desarves that, an' more if he'd get it."

"Do I?" said the other; "an' what have you to say on the head of it, Bartle?"

"Why, not much," answered Bartle, "only that you ought to've left it betune them; an' that I'll back Misther Costigan agin any rascal that 'ud say there was ever a dhrop of his blood in an Informer's veins."

"I say it for one," replied the other.

"And I, for another," said Connell; "an' what's worse, I'll hould a wager, that if he was searched this minute, you'd find a Kay to Gough in his pocket, although he throws Voshtther in *my* teeth: the dunbe never goes widout one. Sure he's not able to set a dacent copy, or headline, or to make a dacent hook, nor a hanger, nor a down stroke, and was a poor scholar, too!"

"I'll give you a down stroke in the mane time, you ignoramus," said the pedagogue, throwing himself to the end of the table at which his enemy sat, and laying him along the floor by a single blow.

He was instantly attacked by the friend of the prostrate academician, who was in his turn attacked by the friend of Costigan. The adherents of the respective teachers were immediately rushing to a general engagement, when the door opened, and Darby More made his appearance.

"Asy!—stop wid yees!—hould back, ye disgraceful villains!" exclaimed the mendicant, in a thundering voice. "Be asy, I say. Saints in glory! is this the way you're settlin' the dispute between the two dacent young men, that's sorry, both o' them, I'll go bail, for what they done. Sit down, every one o' yez, or, by the blessed ordhers I wear about me, I'll report yez to Father Hoolaghan, an' have yez read out from the althar, or sint to Lough Derg! Sit down, I say!"

As he spoke, he extended his huge cant between the hostile parties, and thrust them one by one to their seats with such muscular energy, that he had them sitting before another blow could be given.

"Saints in glory!" he exclaimed again, "isn't this blessed doins an

* Distant relations.

† Cap.

the sacred day that's in it! that a poor helpless ould man like me can't come to get somethin' to take away this misfortunit touch o' configuration that I'm afflicted wid in cowld weather—that I can't take a little sup of the only thing that cures me—widout your ructions and battles! You came here to make pace between two dacent men's childher, an' you're as bad, if not worse, yourselves!—Oh, wurrah dheelish, what's this! I'm in downright agony! Oh, murder sheery! Has none o' yez a hand to thry if there's e'er a dhrop of relief in that bottle? or am I to die all out, in the face o' the world, for want of a sup o' somethin' to warm me?"

"Darby, thry the horn," said M'Kenna.

"Here, Darby," said one of them, "dhrink this off, an' my life for yours, it'll warm you to the marrow!"

"Och, musha, but I wanted it badly," replied Darby, swallowing it at once; "it's the only thing does me good when I'm this way. *Deah Grasthias!** Oxis Doxis Glorioxis. Amin!"

"I think," said M'Kenna, "that what's in the horn's far afore it."

"Oh, thin, you thoughtless crathur, if you knew somethin' I hard about you a while ago, you'd think otherwise. But, indeed, it's thrue for you; I'm sure I'd be sarry to compare what's in it, to anything o' the kind I tuck. *Deah Grasthias!* Throth, I'm asier now a great dale nor I was."

"Will you take another sup, Darby?" inquired the young fellow in whose hands the bottle was now nearly empty; "there's jist about another glass."

"Indeed, an' I will, *a villish*;† an' sure you'll have my blessin' for it, an' barrin' the priest's own, you couldn't have a more luckier one, blessed be God for it—sure *that's* well known. In throth, they never came to ill that had it, an' never did good that got my curse! Houp! do you hear how that rises the wind off o' my stomach! Houp!—*Deah Grasthias* for that!"

"How did you larn all the prayers an' charms you have, Darby?" inquired the bottle-holder.

"It would take me too long to tell you that, *a villish!* But, childher, now that you're all together, make it up wid one another. Aren't you all frinds an' brothers, *sworn* brothers, an' why would you be fightin' among other? Mистер Costigan, give me your hand; sure I heard a thrifle o' what you were sayin' while I was suckin' my dudeen at the fire widout. Come here, Mистер Connell. Now, before the saints in glory, I lay my bitther curse an him that refuses to shake hands wid his inimy. There now—I'm proud to see it. Mike, avourneen, come here—Frank M'Kenna, *gutsho*,‡ walk over here; my bitther heart's curse upon both of yez, if you don't make up all quarrels this minnit! Are you willin', Mike Reillaghan?"

"I have no objection in life," replied Mike, "if he'll say that Peggy Gartland won't be put to any more throuble through his manes."

"There's my hand, Mike," said Frank, "that I forget an' forgive all

* God be praised. † My sweet!—an epithet of endearment. ‡ Come hither.

that's past; and in regard o' Peggy Gartland, why, as she's so dark agin me, I lave her to you for good."*

"Well! see what it is to have the good intintions!—to be makin' pace an' frindship atween inimies! That's all I think about, an' nothin' gives me greater pleas—Saints o' glory!—what's this!—Oh wurra!—that thief of a—wurrah dheelish!—that touch o' configuration's comin' back agin!—Oh, thin, but it's hard to get it undher!—Oh!"—

"I'm sarry for it, Darby," replied he who held the now empty bottle; "for the whisky's out."

"Throth, an' I'm sarry myself, for nothin' else does me good; an' Father Hoolaghan says nothin' *can* keep it down, barrin' the sup o' whisky. It's best burnt, wid a little bit o' butther an it; but I can't get that always, it overtakes me so suddenly, glory be to God!"

"Well," said M'Kenna, "as Mike an' myself was the manes of bringin' us together, why, if he joins me, we'll have another bottle."

"Throth, an' it's fair an' dacent, an' he must do it; by the same a token, that I'll not lave the house till it's dhrunk, for there's no thrustin' yez together, you're so hot-headed an' ready to rise the hand," said Darby.

M'Kenna and Mike, having been reconciled, appeared in a short time warmer friends than ever. While the last bottle went round, those who had before been on the point of engaging in personal conflict, now laughed at their own foibles, and expressed the kindness and good-will which they felt for each other at heart.

"Now," said the mendicant, "go all of you to mass, an' as soon as you can, to confession, for it's not good to have the broken oath an' the sin of it over one. Confess it, an' have your consciences light: sure it's a happiness that you *can* have the guilt taken off o' yez, childher."

"Thru for you, Darby," they replied; "an' we'll be thinkin' of your advice."

"Ay, do, childher; an' there's Father Hoolaghan comin' down the road, so, in the name o' Goodness, we haven't a minnit to lose."

They all left the shebeen-house as he spoke except Frank and himself, who remained until they had gone out of hearing.

"Darby," said he, "I want you to come up to our house in the mornin', an' bring along wid you the things that you stamp the crass upon the skin wid: I'm goin' to get the crucifix put upon me. But on the paril o' your life, don't brathe a word of it to mortal."

"God enable you, avick! it's a good intintion. I will indeed be up wid you—airly, too, wid a blessin'. It is that, indeed—a good intintion, sure enough."

The parish chapel was about one hundred perches from the shebeen-house in which the "boys" had assembled; the latter were proceeding there in a body when Frank overtook them.

"Mike," said he aside to Reillaghan, "we'll have time enough—walk back a bit; I'll tell you what I'm thinkin'; you never seen in your life a finer day for thracin'; what 'ud you say if we give the boys the slip, never heed mass, an' set off to the mountains?"

"Won't we have time enough after mass?" said Reilla ghan.

* In future—altogether.

"Why, man, sure you *did* hear mass *once* to-day. Weren't you at it last night? No, indeed, we won't be time enough after it; for this bein' Chris-mas-day, we must be home at dinner-time; you know it's not lucky to be from the family upon set days. Hang-an-ounty, come; we'll have fine sport! I have cocksticks* enough. The best part of the day 'll be gone if we wait for mass. Come, an' let us start."

"Well, well," replied Reillaghan, "the sarra hair I care; so let us go. I'd like myself to have a rap at the hares in the Black Hills, sure enough; but as it 'ud be remarkable for us to be seen lavin' mass, why let us crass the field here, an' get out upon the road above the bridge."

To this his companion assented, and they both proceeded at a brisk pace, each apparently anxious for the sport, and resolved to exhibit such a frank cordiality of manner as might convince the other that all their past enmity was forgotten and forgiven.

Their direct path to the mountains lay by M'Kenna's house, where it was necessary they should call, in order to furnish themselves with cocksticks, and to bring dogs which young Frank kept for the purpose. The inmates of the family were at mass, with the exception of Frank's mother, and Rody, the servant-man, whom they found sitting on his own bed in the barn, engaged at cards, the right hand against the left.

"Well, Rody," said Frank, "who's winnin'?"

"The left entirely," replied his companion: "the divil a game at all the right's gettin', whatever's the rason of it, an' I'm always turnin' up black. I hope none of my frinds or acquaintances will die soon."

"Throw them aside—quit of them," said Frank, "give them to me, I'll put them past; an' do you bring us out the gun. I've the powdher an' shot here; we may as well bring her, an' have a slap at them. One o' the officers in the barracks of — keeps me in powdher an' shot, besides givin' me an odd crown, an' I keep him in game."

"Why, thin, boys," observed Rody, "what's the manin' o' this?—two o' the biggest ininies in Europe last night an' this mornin', an' now as great as two thieves! How does that come?"

"Very asy, Rody," replied Reillaghan; "we made up the quarrel, shuck hands, an's good frinds as ever."

"Bedad, that bates cock-fightin'," said Rody, as he went to bring in the gun.

In the mean time, Frank, with the cards in his hand, went to the eave of the barn, thrust them up under the thatch, and took out of the same nook a flask of whisky.

"We'll want this," said he, putting it to his lips, and gulping down a portion. "Come, Mike, be tastin'; an' afterwards put this in your pocket."

Mike followed his example, and was corking the flask when Rody returned with the gun.

"She's charged," said Frank; "but we'd bether put in fresh primin for 'fraid of her hangin' fire."

He then primed the gun, and handed it to Reillaghan. "Do *you* keep

* A cockstick was so called from being used on Cock-Monday, to throw at a cock tied to a stake, which was a game common among the people. It was about the length of a common stick, but much heavier and thicker at one end.

the gun, Mike," he added, " an' I'll keep the cocksticks. Rody, I'll bet you a shillin' I kill more wid the cockstick, nor he will wid the gun. Will you take me up?"

" I know a safer thrick," replied Rody: " you're a dead aim wid the cockstick, sure enough, an' a deader wid the gun, too: catch me at it."

" You show some sines, for a wondher," observed Frank, as he and his companion left the barn, and turned towards the mountains, which rose frowning behind the house.

Rody stood looking after them until they wound up slowly out of sight among the hills; he then shook his head two or three times, and exclaimed, " By dad, ther's somethin' in this, if one could make out what it is. I *know* Frank."

Christmas-day passed among the peasantry, as it usually passes in Ireland. Friends met before dinner in their own, in their neighbours', in shebeen or in public houses, where they drank, sang, or fought, according to their natural dispositions, or the quantity of liquor they had taken. The festivity of the day might be known by the unusual reek of smoke that danced from each chimney, by the number of persons who crowded the roads, by their bran-new dresses,—for if a young man or country girl can afford a dress at all, they provide it for Christmas,—and by the striking appearance of those who, having drunk a little too much, were staggering home in the purest happiness, singing, stopping their friends, shaking hands with them, or kissing them, without any regard to sex. Many a time might be seen two Irishmen, who had got drunk together, leaving a fair or market, their arms about each other's necks, from whence they only removed them to kiss and hug one another the more lovingly. Notwithstanding this, there is nothing more probable than that these identical two will enjoy the luxury of a mutual battle, by way of episode, and again proceed on their way, kissing and hugging as if nothing had happened to interrupt their friendship. All the usual effects of jollity and violence, fun and fighting, love and liquor, were, of course, to be seen, felt, heard, and understood on this day, in a manner much more remarkable than on common occasions; for it may be observed, that the national festivals of the Irish bring out their strongest points of character with peculiar distinctness.

The family of Frank M'Kenna were sitting down to their Christmas dinner; the good man had besought a blessing upon the comfortable and abundant fare of which they were about to partake, and nothing was amiss, save the absence of their younger son.

" Musha, where on earth can this boy be stayin'?" said the father: " I'm sure this, above all days in the year, is one he oughtn't to be from home an."

The mother was about to inform him of the son's having gone to the mountains, when the latter returned, breathless, pale, and horror-struck.

Rody eyed him keenly, and laid down the bit he was conveying to his mouth.

" Heavens above us!" exclaimed his mother, " what ails you?"

He only replied by dashing his hat upon the ground, and exclaiming, " Up wid yez!—up wid yez!—quit your dinners! Oh, Rody! what'll

be done? Go down to Owen Reillaghan's—go 'way—go down—an' tell thim—Oh, *vick-na-hois!* but this was the unfortunate day to us all! Mike Reillaghan is shot with my gun; she went off in his hand goin' over a snow wreath, an' he's lyin' dead in the mountains!"

The screams and the wailing which immediately rose in the family were dreadful. Mrs. M'Kenna almost fainted; and the father, after many struggles to maintain his firmness, burst into the bitter tears of disconsolation and affliction. Rody was calmer, but turned his eyes from one to another with a look of deep compassion, and again eyed Frank keenly and suspiciously.

Frank's eye caught his, and the glance which had surveyed him with such scrutiny did not escape his observation. "Rody," said he, "do you go an' brake it to the Reillaghans: you're the best to do it; for, when we were settin' out, you saw that *he* carried the gun, an' not *me*."

"Thru for you," said Rody; "I saw that, Frank, and can swear to it; but that's all I *did* see. I know nothing of what happened in the mountains."

"*Damnho sheery orth!* * What do you mane, you villain?" exclaimed Frank, seizing the tongs, and attempting to strike him: "do you dar to suspect that I had any hand in it?"

"*Wurrah dheelish,* † Frank," screamed the sisters, "are you goin' to murder Rody?"

"*Murdher,*" he shouted, in a paroxysm of fury, "why the curse o' God upon you all, what puts murder into your heads? Is it my own family that's the first to charge me wid it?"

"Why, there's no one chargin' you wid it," replied Rody; "not one, whatever makes you take it to yourself."

"An' what did you look at me for, thin, the way you did? What did you look at me for, I say?"

"Is it any wondher," replied the servant, coolly, "when you had sich a dreadful story to tell?"

"Go off," replied Frank, now hoarse with passion—"go off, an' tell the Reillaghans what happened; but, by all the books that ever was opened or shut, if you breathe a word about murdh—about—if you do, you villain, I'll be the death o' you!"

When Rody was gone on this melancholy errand, old M'Kenna first put the tongs, and everything he feared might be used as a weapon by his frantic son, out of his reach; he then took down the book on which he had the night before sworn so rash and mysterious an oath, and desired the son to look upon it.

"Frank," said he, solemnly, "you swore on that blessed book last night, that Mike Reillaghan never would be the husband of Peggy Gartland—*he's a corpse to-day!* Yes," he continued, "the good, the honest, the industrious boy is"—his sobs became so loud and thick that he appeared almost suffocated. "Oh," said he, "may God pity *us!* As I hope to meet my blessed Saviour, who was born on this day, I would rather you wor the corpse, an' not Mike Reillaghan!"

* Eternal perdition on you!

† Sweet Virgin!

"I don't doubt that," said the son, fiercely; "you never showed me much *grah*,* sure enough."

"Did you ever deserve it?" replied the father. "Heaven above me knows it was too much kindness was showed you. When you ought to have been well corrected, you got your will an' your way, an' now see the upshot."

"Well," said the son, "it's the last day ever I'll stay in the family; thrate me as bad as you please. I'll take the king's bounty, an' list, if I live to see to-morrow."

"Oh, thin, in the name o' Goodness, do so," said the father; "an' so far from previntin' you, we'll bless you when you're gone, for goin'."

"Arrah, Frank, aroon," said Mrs. M'Kenna, who was now recovered, "may be, afther all, it was only an accident: sure we often hard of sich things. Don't you remimber Squire Elliott's son, that shot himself by accident, out fowlin'? Frank, can you clear yourself afore us?"

"Ah, Alley! Alley!" exclaimed the father, wiping away his tears, "don't you remimber his *oath*, last night?"

"What oath?" inquired the son, with an air of surprise—"What oath, last night? I know I was dhrunk last night, but I remimber nothing about an oath."

"Do you deny it, you hardened boy?"

"I *do* deny it; an' I'm *not* a hardened boy. What do you all mane? do you want to dhrive me mad? I know nothin' about any oath last night;" replied the son in a loud voice.

The grief of the mother and daughters was loud during the pauses of the conversation. Micaul, the eldest son, sat beside his father in tears.

"Frank," said he, "many an advice I gave you between ourselves, and you know how you tuck them. When you'd stale the oats, an' the meal, and the phayties, an' hay, at night, to have money for your cards an' dhrinkin', I kept it back, an' said nothin' about it. I wish I hadn't done so, for it wasn't for your good; but it was my desire to have as much pace and quietness as possible."

"Frank," said the father, eyeing him solemnly, "it's *possible* that you *do* forget the oath you made last night, for you war in liquor: I would give the wide world that it was thrue. Can you now, in the presence of God, clear yourself of havin' act or part in the death of Mike Reillaghan?"

"What 'ud ail me," said the son, "if I liked?"

"Will you do it now for our satisfaction, an' take a load of misery off of our hearts? It's the laste you may do, if you *can* do it. In the presence of the great God, will you clear yourself now?"

"I suppose," said the son, "I'll have to clear myself to-morrow, an' there's no use in my doin' it more than wanst. When the time comes, I'll do it."

The father put his hands on his eyes, and groaned aloud: so deep was his affliction, that the tears trickled through his fingers during this fresh burst of sorrow. The son's refusal to satisfy them renewed the grief of

* Affection.

all, as well as of the father: it rose again, louder than before, whilst young Frank sat opposite the door, silent and sullen.

It was now dark, but the night was calm and agreeable. M'Kenna's family felt the keen affliction which we have endeavoured to describe; the dinner was put hastily aside, and the festive spirit peculiar to this night became changed into one of gloom and sorrow. In this state they sat, when the voice of grief was heard loud in the distance; the strong cry of men, broken and abrupt, mingled with the shrieking wail of female lamentation.

The M'Kennas started, and Frank's countenance assumed an expression which it would be difficult to describe. There was, joined to his extreme paleness, a restless, apprehensive, and determined look; each trait apparently struggling for the ascendancy in his character, and attempting to stamp his countenance with its own expression.

"Do you hear *that*?" said his father. "Oh, musha, Father of heaven, look down an' support that family this night! Frank, if you take my advice, you'll lave their sight; for surely if they brained you on the spot, who could blame them?"

"Why ought I lave their sight?" replied Frank. "I tell you all that I had no hand in his death. The gun went off by accident as he was crassin' a wreath o' snow. I was afore him, and when I heard the report, an' turned round, there he lay, shot an' bleedin'. I thought it mightn't signify, but on lookin' at him closely, I found him quite dead. I then ran home, never touchin' the gun at all, till his family an' the neighbours 'ud see him. Surely, it's no wondher I'd be distracted in my mind; but that's no rason you should all open upon me, as if I had murdered the boy!"

"Well," said the father, "I'm glad to hear you say even that much. I hope it may be betther wid you than we all think; an' oh! grant it, sweet Mother o' Heaven, this day! Now carry yourself quietly afore the people. If they abuse you, don't fly into a passion, but make allowance for their grief and misery."

In the mean time, the tumult was deepening as it approached M'Kenna's house. The report had almost instantly spread through the village in which Reillaghan lived: and the loud cries of his father and brothers, who, in the wildness of their despair, continually called upon his name, had been heard at the houses which lay scattered over the neighbourhood. Their inmates, on listening to such unusual sounds, sought the direction from which they proceeded, for it was quite evident that some terrible calamity had befallen the Reillaghans, in consequence of the son's name being borne on the blasts of night with such loud and overwhelming tones of grief and anguish. The assembly, on reaching M'Kenna's, might, therefore, be numbered at thirty, including the females of Reillaghan's immediate family, who had been strung by the energy of despair to a capability of bearing any fatigue, or rather to an utter insensibility of all bodily suffering.

We must leave the scene which ensued to the reader's imagination, merely observing, that as neither the oath which young Frank had taken the preceding night, nor indeed the peculiar bitterness of his enmity

towards the deceased, was known by the Reillaghans, they did not, therefore, discredit the account of his death which they had heard.

Their grief was exclamatory and full of horror: consisting of prolonged shrieks on the part of the women, and frantic howlings on that of the men. The only words they uttered were his name, with epithets and ejaculations. *Oh a Vichaul dheelish—a Vichaul dheelish—a bouchal bane machree—wuil thu marra—wuil thu marra?* “Oh, Michael, the beloved—Michael, the beloved—fair boy of our heart—are you dead?—are you dead?”

From M’Kenna’s the crowd, at the head of which was Darby More, proceeded towards the mountains, many of them bearing torches, such as had been used on their way to the Midnight Mass. The moon had disappeared, the darkness was deepening, and the sky was overhung with black heavy clouds, that gave a stormy character to scenery in itself remarkably wild and gloomy.

Young M’Kenna and the pilgrim led them to the dreary waste in which the corpse lay. It was certainly an awful spectacle to behold these unhappy people toiling up the mountain solitude at such an hour, their convulsed faces thrown into striking relief by the light of the torches, and their cries rising in wild irregular cadences upon the blast which swept over them with a dismal howl, in perfect character with their affliction, and the circumstances which produced it.

On arriving within view of the corpse, there was a slight pause; for, notwithstanding the dreadful paroxysms of their grief, there was something still more startling and terrible in contemplating the body thus stretched out in the stillness of death, on the lonely mountain. The impression it produced was peculiarly solemn: the grief was hushed for a moment, but only for a moment; it rose again wilder than before, and in a few minutes the friends of Reillaghan were about to throw themselves upon the body, under the strong impulse of sorrow and affection.

The mendicant, however, stepped forward—“Hould back,” said he; “it’s hard to ax yez to do it, but still you must. Let the neighbours about us here examine the body, in ordher to see whether it mightn’t be possible that the dacent boy came by his death from somebody else’s hand than his own. Hould forrid the lights,” said he, “till we see how he’s lyin’, an’ how the gun’s lyin’.”

“Darby,” said young Frank, “I can’t but be obliged to you for that. You’re the last man livin’ ought to say what you said, afther you seein’ us both forget an’ forgive this day. I call upon you now to say whether you didn’t see him an’ me shakin’ hands, and buryin’ all bad feelin’ between us?”

“I’ll spake to you jist now,” replied the mendicant. “See here, neighbours, obsarve this; the boy was shot in the breast, an’ here’s not a snow wreath, but a weeshy dhrift that a child ’ud step across widout an accident. I tell you all, that I suspect foul play in this.”

“H——’s fire!” exclaimed the brother of the deceased, “what’s that you say? What! Can it be—can it—can it—that you *murdered* him, you villain, that’s known to be nothin’ but a villain? But I’ll do for you!” He snatched at the gun as he spoke, and would probably have

taken ample and fearful vengeance upon Frank, had not the mendicant and others prevented him.

"Have sinse," said Darby; "this is not the way to behave, man: lave the gun lyin' where she is, till we see more about us. Stand back there, an' let me look at these marks: ay, about five yards—there's the track of feet about five yards before him—here they turn about, an' go back. Here, Saviour o' the world! see here! the mark, clane an' clear, of the butt o' the gun! Now if that boy stretched afore us had the gun in *his* hand the time she went off, could the mark of it be *here*? Bring me down the gun—an' the curse o' God upon her for an unlucky thief, whoever had her! It's thrue!—it's too thrue!" he continued—"the man that had the gun stood on *this spot*."

"It's a falsity," said Frank; "it's a damnable falsity. Rody Teague, I call upon you to spake for me. Didn't you see, when we went out to the hills, that it was Mike carried the gun, an' not me?"

"I did," replied Rody. "I can swear to that."

"Ay," exclaimed Frank, with triumph; "an' you yourself, Darby, saw us, as I said, makin' up whatsoever little differences there was betwixt us."

"I did," replied the mendicant, sternly; "but I heard you say, no longer ago than last night—*say!*—why you *swore* it, man alive!—that if *you* wouldn't have Peggy Gartland, *he* never should. In your own stable I heard it, an' I was the manes of disappointin' you an' your gang, when you thought to take away the girl by force. You're well known too often to carry a fair face when the heart under it is black wid you."

"All I can say is," observed young Reillaghan, "that if it comes out agin you that you played him foul, all the earth won't save your life; I'll have your heart's blood, if I should hang for it a thousand times."

This dialogue was frequently interrupted by the sobbings and clamour of the women, and the detached conversation of some of the men, who were communicating to each other their respective opinions upon the melancholy event which had happened.

Darby More now brought Reillaghan's father aside, and thus addressed him:—

"*Gluuntho!**—to tell God's thruth, I've sthrong suspicions that your son was murdered. This sacred thing that I put the crass upon people's breasts wid, saves people from *hangin'* an' unnatural deaths. Frank spoke to me last night, no longer ago, to come up an' mark it an' *him* to-morrow. My opinion is, that he intinded to murder him at that time, an' wanted to have a protection agin what might happen to him in regard o' the black deed."

"Can we prove it agin him?" inquired the disconsolate father: "I know it'll be hard, as there was no one present but themselves; an' if he did it, surely he'll not confess it."

"We may make him do it, maybe," said the mendicant: "the villain' asily frightened, an' fond o' charms an' *pisthrogues*, † an' sich holy things, for all his wickedness. Don't say a word. We'll take him by surprize;

* Listen

† Superstitious spells and witcheries.

I'll call upon him to **TOUCH THE CORPSE**. Make them women—an' ocl, it's hard to expect it—make them stop clappin' their hands, an' cryin'; an' let there be a dead silence, if you can."

During this and some other observations made by Darby, Frank had got the gun in his possession; and, whilst seeming to be engaged in looking at it, and examining the lock, he actually contrived to reload it without having been observed.

"Now, neighbours," said Darby, "hould your tongues for a weeshy start, till I ax Frank M'Kenna a question or two. Frank M'Kenna, as you hope to meet God at Judgment, did you take his life that's lyin' a corpse before us?"

"I did *not*," replied M'Kenna; "I could clear myself on all the books in Europe, that he met his death as I tould you; an' more nor that," he added, dropping upon his knees, and uncovering his head, "*may I die widout priest or prayer—widout help, hope, or happiness, UPON THE SPOT WHERE HE'S NOW STRETCHED, if I murdered or shot him.*"

"I say amin to that," replied Darby: "*Oxis Doxis Gloriosis!*—So far, that's right, if the blood of him's not an you. But there's one thing more to be done: will you walk over *undher the eye of God*, an' **TOUCH THE CORPSE**? Hould baek, neighbours, an' let him come over alone: I an' Owen Reillaghan will stand here wid the lights, to see if the corpse bleeds."

"Give me, too, a light," said M'Kenna's father; "my son must get fair play, any way: I must be a witness myself to it, an' will, too."

"It's but rasonable," said Owen Reillaghan; "come over beside Darby an' myself: I'm willin' that your son should stand or fall by what'll happen."

Frank's father, with a taper in his hand, immediately went, with a pale face and trembling steps, to the place appointed for him beside the corpse, where he took his stand.

When young M'Kenna heard Darby's last question, he seemed as if seized by an inward spasm: the start which he gave, and his gaspings for breath, were visible to all present. Had he seen the spirit of the murdered man before him, his horror could not have been greater; for this ceremony had been considered a most decisive test in cases of suspicion of murder—an ordeal, indeed, to which few murderers wished to submit themselves. In addition to this we may observe, that Darby's knowledge of the young man's character was correct: with all his crimes he was weak-minded and superstitious.

He stood silent for some time after the ordeal had been proposed to him; his hair became literally erect, with the dread of this formidable scrutiny, his cheeks turned white, and the cold perspiration fell from him in large drops. All his strength appeared to have departed from him he stood, as if hesitating, and even the energy necessary to stand seemed to be the result of an effort.

"Remember," said Darby, pulling out the large crucifix which was attached to his beads, "that the eye of God is upon you. If you've committed the murdher, thrimble; if not, Frank, you've little to fear in touchin' the corpse."

Frank had not yet uttered a word ; but, leaning himself on the gun, he looked wildly around him, cast his eyes up to the stormy sky, then turned them with a dead glare upon the corpse and the crucifix.

“ Do you confess the murder ? ” said Darby.

“ Murder ! ” rejoined Frank : “ no ! I confess *no* murder : you villain, do you *want* to make me guilty ;—do you want to make me guilty, you deep villain ? ”

It seemed as if the current of his thoughts and feelings had taken a new direction, though it is probable that the excitement which appeared to be rising within him was only the courage of fear.

“ You all wish to find me guilty,” he added : “ but I’ll show you that I’m not guilty.”

He immediately walked towards the corpse, and stooping down, touched the body with one hand, holding the gun in the other. The interest of that moment was intense, and all eyes were strained towards the spot. Behind the corpse, at each shoulder—for the body lay against a small snow wreath, in a recumbent position—stood the father of the deceased and the father of the accused, each wound up by feelings of a directly opposite character to a pitch of dreadful excitement. Over them, in his fantastic dress and white beard, stood the tall mendicant, who held up his crucifix to Frank, with an awful menace upon his strongly marked countenance. At a little distance to the left of the body stood the other men who were assembled, having their torches held aloft in their hands, and their forms bent towards the corpse, their faces indicating expectation, dread, and horror. The female relations of the deceased stood nearest his remains, their torches extended in the same direction, their visages exhibiting the passions of despair and grief in their wildest characters, but as if arrested by some supernatural object immediately before their eyes, that produced a new and more awful feeling than grief. When the body was touched, Frank stood as if himself bound by a spell to the spot. At length he turned his eyes to the mendicant, who stood silent and motionless, with the crucifix still extended in his hand.

“ Are you satisfied *now* ? ” said he.

“ That’s *wanst*,” said the pilgrim : “ you’re to touch it three times.”

Frank hesitated a moment, but immediately stooped again, and touched it twice in succession ; but it remained still and unchanged as before ! His father broke the silence by a fervent ejaculation of thanksgiving to God for the vindication of his son’s character which he had just witnessed.

“ Now ! ” exclaimed M’Kenna, in a loud exulting tone, “ you all see that I did *not* murder him ! ”

“ You *DID* ! ” said a voice, which was immediately recognised to be that of the deceased.

M’Kenna shrieked aloud, and immediately fled with his gun towards the mountains, pursued by Reillaghan’s other son. The crowd rushed in towards the body, whilst sorrow, affright, exultation, and wonder, marked the extraordinary scene which ensued.

“ Queen o’ Heaven ! ” exclaimed old M’Kenna, “ who could believe this only they hard it ? ”

"The murder wouldn't lie!" shrieked out Mrs. Reillaghan—"the murder wouldn't lie!—the blood o' my darlin' son spoke it!—his blood spoke it; or God, or his angel, spoke it for him!"

"It's beyant anything ever known!" some exclaimed, "to come back an' tell the deed upon his murderer! God presarve us, an' save us, this night! I wish we wor at home, out o' this wild place!"

Others said they had heard of such things; but this having happened before their own eyes, surpassed anything that could be conceived.

The mendicant now advanced, and once more mysteriously held up his crucifix.

"Keep silence!" said he, in a solemn, sonorous voice: "Keep silence, I say, an' kneel down all o' yez before what I've in my hand. If you want to know who or what the voice came from, I can tell yez:—IT WAS THE CRUCIFIX THAT SPOKE!!"

This communication was received with a feeling of devotion too deep for words. His injunction was instantly complied with: they knelt, and bent down in worship before it in the mountain wilds.

"Ay," said he, "littile ye know the virtues of that crucifix! It was consecrated by a friar so holy that it was well known there was but the shadow of him upon the earth, the other part of him bein' night an' day in heaven among the archangels. It shows the power of this Crass, any way; an' you may tell your frinds that I'll sell bades touched wid it to the faithful at sixpence apiece. They can be put an your *padareens* as Dicades, wid a blessin'. Oxis Doxis Glorioxis—Amin! Let us now bear the corpse home, antil it's dressed and laid out dacently as it ought to be."

The body was then placed upon an easy litter, formed of great-coats buttoned together, and supported by the strongest men present, who held it one or two at each corner. In this manner they advanced at a slow pace, until they reached Owen Reillaghan's house, where they found several of the country people assembled, waiting for their return.

It was not until the body had been placed in an inner room, where none were admitted until it should be laid out, that the members of the family first noticed the prolonged absence of Reillaghan's other son. The moment it had been alluded to, they were seized with new alarm and consternation.

"*Hanim an diouol!*" said Reillaghan, bitterly, in Irish, "but I doubt the red-handed villain has cut short the lives of my *two* brave sons! I only hope he may stop in the country: I'm not widout frinds an' followers that 'ud think it no sin in a just cause to pay him in his own coin, an' to take from him an' his a pound o' blood for every ounce of ours they shed."

A number of his friends instantly volunteered to retrace their way to the mountains, and search for the other son. "There's littile danger of his life," said a relation; "it's a short time Frank 'ud stand him, particularly as the gun wasn't charged. We'll go, at any rate, for 'fraid he might lose himself in the mountains, or walk into some o' the lochs on his way home. We had as good bring some whisky wid us, for he may want it badly."

While they had been speaking, however, the snow began to fall and

the wind to blow in a manner that promised a heavy and violent storm. They proceeded, notwithstanding, on their search, and on whistling for the dog, discovered that he was not to be found.

“He went wid us to the mountains, I know,” said the former speaker; “an’ I think it likely he’ll be found wid Owen, wherever he is. Come, boys, step out: it’s a dismal night, any way, the Lord knows—och, och!” And with sorrowful but vigorous steps they went in quest of the missing brother.

Nothing but the preternatural character of the words which were so mysteriously pronounced immediately before Owen’s pursuit of M’Kenna, could have prevented that circumstance, together with the flight of the latter, from exciting greater attention among the crowd. His absence, however, now that they had time to reflect on it, produced unusual alarm, not only on account of M’Kenna’s bad character, but from the apprehension of Owen being lost in the mountains.

The inextinguishable determination of revenge with which an Irishman pursues any person who, either directly or indirectly, takes the life of a near relation, or invades the peace of his domestic affections, was strongly illustrated by the nature of Owen’s pursuit after M’Kenna, considering the appalling circumstances under which he undertook it. It is certainly more than probable that M’Kenna, instead of flying, would have defended himself with the loaded gun, had not his superstitious fears been excited by the words which so mysteriously charged him with the murder. The direction he accidentally took led both himself and his pursuer into the wildest recesses of the mountains. The chase was close and desperate, and certainly might have been fatal to Reillaghan, had M’Kenna thought of using the gun. His terror, however, exhausted him, and overcame his presence of mind to such a degree, that so far from using the weapon in his defence, he threw it aside, in order to gain ground upon his pursuer. This he did but slowly, and the pursuit was as yet uncertain. At length Owen found the distance between himself and his brother’s murderer increasing; the night was dark, and he himself feeble and breathless: he therefore gave over all hope of securing him, and returned to follow those who had accompanied him to the spot where his brother’s body lay. It was when retracing his path that the nature of his situation occurred to him: the snow had not begun to fall, but the appearance of the sky was strongly calculated to depress him.

Every person knows with what remarkable suddenness snow storms descend. He had scarcely advanced homewards more than twenty minutes, when the gray tempest spread its dusky wings over the heavens, and a darker shade rapidly settled upon the white hills—now becoming indistinct in the gloom of the air, which was all in commotion, and groaned aloud with the noise of the advancing storm. When he saw the deep gloom, and felt the chilling coldness pierce his flesh so bitterly, he turned himself in the direction which led by the shortest possible line towards his father’s house. He was at this time nearly three miles from any human habitation; and as he looked into the darkness, his heart began to palpitate with an alarm almost bordering on hopelessness. His dog, which had, up till this boding change, gone on before him, now

partook in his master's apprehensions, and trotted anxiously at his feet.

In the mean time the winds howled in a melancholy manner along the mountains, and carried with them from the upper clouds the rapidly descending sleet. The storm-current, too, was against him, and as the air began to work in dark confusion, he felt for the first time how utterly helpless a thing he was under the fierce tempest in this dreadful solitude.

At length the rushing sound which he first heard in the distance approached him in all its terrors; and in a short time he was staggering, like a drunken man, under the incessant drifts which swept over him and about him. Nothing could exceed the horrors of the atmosphere at this moment. From the surface of the earth the whirlwinds swept immense snow-clouds that rose up instantaneously, and shot off along the brows and ravines of the solitary wild, sometimes descending into the valleys, and again rushing up the almost perpendicular sides of the mountains, with a speed, strength, and noise, that mocked at everything possessing life; whilst in the air the tumult and the darkness continued to deepen in the most awful manner. The winds seemed to meet from every point of the compass, and the falling drifts flew backward and forward in every direction; the cold became intense, and Owen's efforts to advance homewards were beginning to fail. He was driven about like an autumn leaf, and his dog, which kept close to him, had nearly equal difficulty in proceeding. No sound but that of the tempest could now be heard, except the screaming of the birds as they were tossed on sidewing through the commotion which prevailed.

In this manner was Owen whirled about, till he lost all knowledge of his local situation, being ignorant whether he advanced towards home or otherwise. His mouth and eyes were almost filled with driving sleet; sometimes a cloud of light sandlike drift would almost bury him, as it crossed, or followed, or opposed his path; sometimes he would sink to the middle in a snow-wreath, from which he extricated himself with great difficulty; and among the many terrors by which he was beset, that of walking into a lake, or over a precipice, was not the least paralyzing. Owen was a young man of great personal strength and activity, for the possession of which, next to his brother, he had been distinguished among his companions; but he now became totally exhausted; the chase after M'Kenna, his former exertion, his struggles, his repeated falls, his powerful attempts to get into the vicinity of life, the desperate strength he put forth in breaking through the vortex of the whirlwind, all had left him faint, and completely at the mercy of the elements.

The cold sleet scales were now frozen to ice on his cheeks; his clothes were completely incrustated with the hard snow, which had been beating into them by the strength of the blast, and his joints were getting stiff and benumbed. The tumult of the tempest, the whirling of the snow-clouds, and the thick snow, now falling, and again tossed upwards by sudden gusts to the sky, deprived him of all power of reflection, and rendered him, though not altogether blind or deaf, yet incapable of forming any distinct opinion upon what he saw or heard. Still, actuated by the unconscious principle of self-preservation, he tottered on, cold, feeble, and

breathless, now driven back like a reed by the strong rush of the storm, or prostrated almost to suffocation under the whirlwinds, that started up like savage creatures of life about him.

During all this time his faithful dog never abandoned him ; but his wild howlings only heightened the horrors of his situation. When he fell, the affectionate creature would catch the flap of his coat, or his arm, in his teeth, and attempt to raise him ; and as long as his master had presence of mind, with the unerring certainty of instinct, he would turn him, when taking a wrong direction, into that which led homewards.

Owen was not, however, reduced to this state without experiencing sensations of which no language could convey adequate notions. At first he struggled heroically with the storm ; but when utter darkness threw its impervious shades over the desolation around him, and the fury of the elements grew so tremendous, all the strong propensities to life became roused, the convulsive throes of a young heart on the steep of death threw a wild and corresponding energy into his vigorous frame, and occasioned him to cling to existence with a tenacity rendered still stronger by the terrible consciousness of his unprepared state, and the horror of being plunged into eternity unsupported by the rites of his church, whilst the crime of attempting to take away human life lay on his soul. Those domestic affections, too, which in Irishmen are so strong, became excited ; his home, his fireside, the faces of his kindred, already impressed with affliction for the death of one brother, were conjured up in the powerful imagery of natural feeling, the fountains of which were opened in his heart, and his agonizing cry for life rose wildly from the mountain desert upon the voice of the tempest. Then, indeed, when the gulf of a two-fold death yawned before him, did the struggling spirit send up its shrieking prayer to heaven with desperate impulse. These struggles, however, as well as those of the body, became gradually weaker as the storm tossed him about, and with the chill of its breath withered him into total helplessness. He reeled on, stiff and insensible, without knowing whither he went, falling with every blast, and possessing scarcely any faculty of life except mere animation.

After about an hour, however, the storm subsided, and the clouds broke away into light fleecy columns before the wind ; the air, too, became less cold, and the face of nature more visible. The driving sleet and hard granular snow now ceased to fall ; but were succeeded by large feathery flakes, that descended slowly upon the still air.

Had this trying scene lasted much longer, Owen must soon have been a stiffened corse. The child-like strength, however, which just enabled him to bear up without sinking in despair to die, now supported him when there was less demand for energy. The dog, too, by rubbing itself against him, and licking his face, enabled him, by a last effort, to recollect himself, so as to have a glimmering perception of his situation. His confidence returned, and with it a greater degree of strength. He shook, as well as he could, the snow from his clothes, where it had accumulated heavily, and felt himself able to proceed, slowly, it is true, towards his father's house, which he had nearly reached when he met his friends, who were once more hurrying out to the mountains in quest of

him, having been compelled to return, in consequence of the storm, when they had first set out. The whisky, their companionship, and their assistance, soon revived him. One or two were despatched home before them, to apprise the afflicted family of his safety; and the intelligence was hailed with melancholy joy by the Reillaghans. A faint light played for a moment over the gloom which had settled among them, but it was brief; for on ascertaining the safety of their second son, their grief rushed back with renewed violence, and nothing could be heard but the voice of sorrow and affliction.

Darby More, who had assumed the control of the family, did everything in his power to console them; his efforts, however, were viewed with a feeling little short of indignation.

"Darby," said the afflicted mother, "you have, undher God, in some sinse, my fair son's death to account for. You had a dhrame, but you wouldn't tell it to us. If you had, my boy might be livin' this day, for it would be say for him to be an his guard."

"Musha, poor woman," replied Darby, "sure you don't know, you afflicted crathur, what you're spakin' about. Tell my dhrame! Why, thin, it's myself towld it to him from beginning to ind, and that whin we wor goin' to mass this day itself. I desired him, on the paril of his life, not to go out a tracin', or toards the mountains, good or bad."

"You said you had a prayer that 'ud keep it back," observed the mother, "an' why didn't you say it?"

"I did say it," replied Darby, "an' that afore a bit crassed my throath this mornin'; but, you see, he broke his promise of not goin' to the mountains, an' *that* was what made the dhrame come thrue."

"Well, well, Darby, I beg your pardon, an' God's pardon, for judgin' you in the wrong. Oh, wurraw sthru! my brave son, is it there you're lyin' wid us, avourneen machree!" and she again renewed her grief.

"Oh, thin, I'm sure I forgive you," said Darby; "but keep your grief in for a start, till I say the *De prouhinjis* over him, for the pace an' repose of his sowl. Kneel down all of yez."

He repeated this prayer in language which it would require one of Edward Irving's adepts in the Unknown Tongues to interpret. When he had recited about the half of it, Owen, and those who had gone to seek him, entered the house, and, after the example of the others, reverently knelt down until he finished it.

Owen's appearance once more renewed their grief. The body of his brother had been removed to a bed beyond the fire in the kitchen; and when Owen looked upon the features of his beloved companion, he approached, and stooped down to kiss his lips. He was still too feeble, however, to bend by his own strength; and it is also probable that the warm air of the house relaxed him. Be this however as it may, he fell forward, but supported himself by his hands, which were placed upon the body; a deep groan was heard, and the apparently dead man opened his eyes, and feebly exclaimed—"A dhrink! a dhrink!"

Darby More had, on concluding the *De profundis*, seated himself beside the bed on which Mike lay; but on hearing the groan, and the call for drink, he leaped rapidly to his legs and exclaimed, "My sowl to hell

an' the divil, Owen Reillaghan, but your son's alive !! Off wid two or three of yez, as hard as the divil can dhrive yez, for the priest an' docthor !! Off wid yez ! ye damned lazy spalpeens, aren't ye near there by this ? Give us my cant ! Are yez gone ? Oh, by this an' by that—hell—eh—aren't yez gone ?" but ere he could finish the sentence they had set out.

"Now," he exclaimed in a voice whose tremendous tones were strongly at variance with his own injunctions—"Now, neighbours, d——n yez, keep silence. Mrs. Reillaghan, get a bottle of whisky an' a mug o' wather. Make haste. *Hanim an diouol!* don't be all night !"

The poor mother, however, could not stir ; the unexpected revulsion of feeling which she had so suddenly experienced was more than she could sustain. A long fainting-fit was the consequence, and Darby's commands were obeyed by the wife of a friendly neighbour.

The mendicant immediately wetted Mike's lips, and poured some spirits, copiously diluted with water, down his throat ; after which he held the whisky-bottle, like a connoisseur, between himself and the light. "I hope," said he, "this whisky is the ra-al crathur." He put the bottle to his mouth as he spoke, and on holding it a second time before his eye, he shook his head complacently—"Ay," said he, "if any thing could bring the dead back to this world, my sowl to glory, but *that* would. Oh, thin, it would give the dead life, sure enough !" He put it once more to his lips, from which it was not separated without relinquishing a considerable portion of its contents.

"*Dhea Grashthias!*" he exclaimed ; "throth, I find myself the betther o' that sup, in regard that it's good for this touch o' configuration that I'm troubled wid inwardly ! Oxis Doxis Glorioxis ! Amin !" These words he spoke in a low, placid voice, lest the wounded man might be discomposed by his observations.

The rapidity with which the account of Mike's restoration to life spread among the neighbours was surprising. Those who had gone for the priest and doctor communicated it to all they met, and these again to others : so that in a short time the house was surrounded by great numbers of their acquaintances, all anxious to hear the particulars more minutely.

Darby, who never omitted an opportunity of impressing the people with a belief in his own sanctity, and in that of his crucifix, came out among them, and answered their inquiries by a solemn shake of his head, and a mysterious indication of his finger to the crucifix, but said nothing more. This was enough. The murmur of reverence and wonder spread among them, and ere long there were few present who did not believe that Reillaghan had been restored to life by a touch of Darby's crucifix ; an opinion which is not wholly exploded until this day.

Peggy Gartland, who fortunately had not heard the report of her lover's death until it was contradicted by the account of his revival, now entered, and by her pale countenance betrayed strong symptoms of affection and sympathy. She sat by his side, gazing mournfully on his features, and with difficulty suppressed her tears.

For some time before her arrival, the mother and sisters of Mike had been removed to another room, lest the tumultuous expression of their

mingled joy and sorrow might disturb him. The fair artless girl, although satisfied that he still lived, entertained no hopes of his recovery ; but she ventured, in a low, trembling voice, to inquire from Darby some particulars of the melancholy transaction which was likely to deprive her of her betrothed husband.

“ Where did the shot sthrike him, Darby ? ”

“ Clane through the body, a villish ; jist where Captain Cramer was shot at the battle o’ Bunker’s Hill, where he lay as good as dead for twelve hours, and was near bein’ berrid a *corp*, an’ him alive all the time, only that as they were pullin’ him off o’ the cart, he gev a shout, an’ thin, a *colleen dhas*, they began to think he might be livin’ still. Sure enough, he was, too, an’ lived successfully, till he died wid dhrinkin’ brandy, as a cure for the gout ; the Lord be praised ! ”

“ Where’s the villain, Darby ? ”

“ He’s in the mountains, no doubt, where he had thim to fight wid that’s a match for him—God, an’ the dark storm that fell awhile agone. *They’ll* pay him, never fear, for his thrachery to the noble boy that chastised him for your sake, *acushla oge** ! Sthrong was your hand, a *Voehal*, an’ ginerous was your affectionate heart ; an’ well you loved the fair girl that’s sitting beside you ! Throth, Peggy, my heart’s black with sarrow about the darlin’ young man. Still life’s ia him ; an’ while there’s life there’s hope ; glory be to God ! ”

The eulogium of the pilgrim, who was, in truth, much attached to Mike, moved the heart of the affectionate girl, whose love and sympathy were pure as the dew on the grass-blade, and now as easily affected by the slightest touch. She remained silent for a time, but secretly glided her hand towards that of her lover, which she clasped in hers, and by a gentle and timid pressure, strove to intimate to him that she was beside him. Long, but unavailing, was the struggle to repress her sorrow : her bosom heaved ; she gave two or three loud sobs, and burst into tears and lamentations.

“ Don’t cry, avourneen,” whispered Darby—“ Don’t cry ; I’ll warrant you, that Darby More will ate share of your weddin’ dinner an’ his, yit. There’s a small taste of colour comin’ to his face, which, I think, undher God, is owin’ to my touchin’ him wid the cruciwhix. Don’t cry, a colleen, he’ll get over it an’ more than it, yit, a colleen bawn ! ”

Darby then hurried her into the room where Mike’s mother and sisters were. On entering she threw herself into the arms of the former, laid her face on her bosom, and wept bitterly. This renewed the mother’s grief : she clasped the interesting girl in a sorrowful embrace ; so did his sisters. They threw themselves into each other’s arms, and poured forth those touching, but wild bursts of pathetic language, which are always heard when the heart is struck by some desolating calamity.

“ Husht ! ” said a neighbouring man who was present ; “ husht ! it’s a shame for yez, an’ the boy not dead yit.”

“ I’m not ashamed,” said Peggy : “ why should I be ashamed of bein’ sarry for the likes of Mike Reillaghan ? Where was his aquil ? Wasn’t

* *Acushla oge*—My young pulse !

all hearts upon him? Didn't the very poor on the road bless him whin he passed? Who ever had a bad word agin him, but the villain that murdered him? Murdered him! Heaven above me! an' why? For my sake! For my sake the pride o' the parish is laid low! Ashamed! Is it for cryin' for my betrothed husband, that was sworn to me, an' I to him, before the eye of God above us? This day week I was to be his bride; an' now—now—Oh, Vread Reillaghan, take me to you! Let me go to his mother! My heart's broke, Vread Reillaghan! Let me go to her: nobody's grief for him is like ours. You're his mother, an' I'm his wife in the sight o' God. Proud was I out of him: my eyes brightened when they seen him, an' my heart got light when I heard his voice; an' now what's afore me?—what's afore me but sorrowful days an' a broken heart!"

Mrs. Reillaghan placed her tenderly and affectionately beside her, on the bed whereon she herself sat. With the corner of her handkerchief she wiped the tears from the weeping girl, although her own flowed fast. Her daughters, also, gathered about her, and, in language of the most endearing kind, endeavoured to soothe and console her.

"He may live yet, Peggy, avourneen," said his mother: "my brave an' noble son may live yet, an' you may be both happy! Don't be cryin' so much, *asthore gah machree*;* sure he's in the hands o' God, avourneen; an' your young heart won't be broke I hope. Och, the Lord pity her young feelins!" exclaimed the mother, affected even by the consolation she herself offered to the betrothed bride of her son: "is it any wondher she'd sink undher sich a blow! for, sure enough, where was the likes of him? No, *asthore*; it's no wondher—it's no wondher! Lonesome will your heart be widout him; for I know what he'd feel if a hair of *your* head was injured."

"Oh, I know it—I know it! There was music in his voice, an' *grah*† an' kindness to every crathur an God's earth; but to me—to me—oh, no one knew his love to me, but myself an' God. Oh, if I was dead, that I couldn't feel this, or if my life could save his! Why didn't the villain—the black villain, wid God's curse upon him—why didn't he shoot me, thin I could never be Mike's wife, an' his hand o' murder might be satisfied? If he had, I wouldn't feel as I do. Ay! the warmest, an' the best, an' the dearest blood of my heart, I could shed for him. That heart was his, an' he had a right to it. Our love wasn't of yistherday: afore the links of my hair came to my showldhers I loved him, an' thought of him; an' many a time he tould me that I was his first! God knows he was my first, an' he will be my last, let him live or die."

"Well, but, Peggy achora," said his sister, "maybe it's sinful to be cryin' this way, an' he not dead."

"God forgive me, if it's a sin," replied Peggy; "I'd not wish to do anything sinful or displasin' to God; an' I'll sthrive to keep down my grief: I will, as well as I can."

* The beloved white (girl) of my heart.

† Affection.

She put her hands on her face, and by an effort of firmness, subdued the tone of her grief to a low continuous murmur of sorrow.

"An' along wid that," said the sister, "maybe the noise is disturbin him. Darby put us all out o' the kitchen to have pace an' quietness about him."

"An' 'twas well thought o' Darby," she replied; "an' may the blessin' o' God rest upon him for it! A male's mate, or a night's lodgin' he'll never want undher my father's roof for that goodness to *Aim*. I'll be quiet thin."

There was now a short pause, during which those in the room heard a smack, accompanied by the words, "*Dheah Grashthias!* Throth I'm the betther o' that sup, so I am. Nothin' keeps this thief of a configuration down but it. *Dheah Grashthias* for that! Oh, thin, this *is* the stuff! It warms a body to the tops o' the nails!"

"Don't spare it, Darby," said old Reillaghan, "if it does you good."

"Avourneen," said Darby, "it's only what gives me a little relief I ever take, *jist by way of cure*, for it's the only thing does me good, when I am this-a-way."

Several persons in the neighbourhood were, in the mean time, flocking to Reillaghan's house. A worthy man, accompanied by his wife, entered as the pilgrim had concluded. The woman, in accordance with the custom of the country, raised the Irish cry, in a loud, melancholy wail, that might be heard at a great distance.

Darby, who prided himself on maintaining silence, could not preserve the consistency of his character upon this occasion, any more than on that of Mike's recent symptoms of life.

"Your sowl to the divil, you faggot!" he exclaimed, "what do you mane? The divil whip the tongue out o' you! are you goin' to come here only to disturb the boy that's not dead yet? Get out o' this, an' be asy wid your skhreechin', or by the crass that died for us, only you're a woman, I'd tumble you wid a lick o' my cant. Keep asy, you vagrant, an' the dacent boy not dead yet. Hell bellows you, what do you mane?"

"Not dead!" exclaimed the woman, with her body bent in the proper attitude, her hands extended, and the crying face turned with amazement to Darby. "Not dead! Wurrah, man alive, isn't he murdered?"

"Hell resave the matther for that!" replied Darby. "I tell you he's livin', an' will live, I hope, barrin' your skirlin' dh rives the life that's in him out of him. Go into the room there to the women, an' make yourself scarce out o' this, or by the padareens about me, I'll malivogue you."

"We can't be angry wid the dacent woman," observed old Reillaghan, "in regard that she came to show her friendship and respect."

"I'd be angry wid St. Pether," said Darby, "an' 'ud not scruple to give him a lick o' my c—— Lord presarve us! what was I goin' to say! Why, throth, I believe the little wits I had are all gone a shaughran! I must fast a Friday or two for the same words agin St. Pether. *Oxis Doxis Glorioxis—Amin.*"

Hope is strong in love and in life. Peggy, now that grief had eased her heart of its load of accumulated sorrow, began to reflect upon Darby's anecdote of Captain Cramer, which she related to those about her. They all rejoiced to hear that it was possible to be wounded so severely and live. They also consoled and supported each other, and expressed their trust that Mike might also recover. The opinion of the doctor was waited for with such anxiety as a felon feels when the foreman of the jury hands down the verdict which consigns him to life or death.

Whether Darby's prescription was the result of chance or sagacity we know not. We are bound, however, to declare that Reillaghan's strength was in some degree restored, although the pain he suffered amounted to torture. The surgeon (who was also a physician, and, moreover, supplied his own medicines) and the priest, as they lived in the same town, both arrived together. The latter administered the rites of his church to him; and the former, who was a skilful man, left nothing undone to accomplish his restoration to health. He had been shot through the body with a *bullet*—a circumstance which was not known until the arrival of the surgeon. This gentleman expressed much astonishment at his surviving the wound, but said that circumstances of a similar nature had occurred, particularly on the field of battle, although he admitted that they were few.

Darby, however, who resolved to have something like a decided opinion from him, without at all considering whether such a thing was possible, pressed him strongly upon the point.

"Arrah, blur-an-age, Docthor Swither, say one thing or other. Is he to live or die? Plain talk, Docthor, is all we want, an' no *feasthalagh*!"*

"The bullet, I am inclined to think," replied the Doctor, "must either not have touched a vital part, or touched it only slightly. I have known cases similar, it is true; but it is impossible for me to pronounce a decisive opinion upon him just now."

"The devil resave the yarrib † ever I'll gather for you agin, so long as my name's Darby More, except you say either 'life' or 'death,'" said Darby, who forgot his character of sanctity altogether.

"Darby, achora," said Mrs. Reillaghan, "don't crass the gintleman, an' him sthrivin' to do his best. Here, Paddy Gormly, bring some wather till the docthor washes his hands."

"Darby," replied the Doctor, to whom he was well known, "you are a good herbalist, but even although you should not serve me as usual in that capacity, yet I cannot say exactly either life or death. The case is too critical a one; but I do not despair, Darby, if that will satisfy you."

"More power to you, Docthor, achora. Hell-an-age, where's that bottle? bring it here. Thank you, Vread. Docthor, here's wishin' you all happiness, an' may you set Mike on his legs wanst more! See, Docthor—see, man alive—look at this purty girl here, wid her wet cheeks; give

* Nonsense.

† Herb.—Men of Darby's cast were often in the habit of collecting rare medicinal plants for the apothecaries; and not bad botanists some of them were.

her some hope, ahagur, if you can ; keep the crathur's spirits up, an' I'll furnish you wid every yarrib in Europe, from the nettle to the rose."

"Don't despair, my good girl," said the Doctor, addressing Peggy. "I hope, I trust, that he may recover ; but he must be kept easy and quiet."

"May the blessing of God, Sir, light down on you for the same words," replied Peggy, in a voice tremulous with gratitude and joy.

"Are you done wid him, Docthor?" said old Reillaghan.

"At present," replied the Doctor, "I can do nothing more for him ; but I shall see him early to-morrow morning."

"Bekase, Sir," continued the worthy man, "here's Darby More, who's afflicted with a conflagration, or some sich thing, inwardly, an' if you should ase him, Sir, I'd pay the damages, whatever they might be."

The Doctor smiled slightly. "Darby's complaint," said he, "is beyond my practice ; there is but one cure for it, and that is, if I have any skill, a little of what's in the bottle here, taken, as our prescriptions sometimes say, 'when the patient is inclined for it.'"

"By my sou—sanctity, Docthor," said Darby, "you're a man o' skill, any how, an' that's well known, Sir. Nothin', as Father Hoolaghan says, but the sup o' whisky does this sarra of a configuration good. It riss the wind off o' my stomach, Docthor!"

"It does, Darby, it does. Now let all be peace and quietness," continued the Doctor: "take away a great part of this fire, and don't attempt to remove him to any other bed until I desire you. I shall call again to-morrow morning early."

The Doctor's attention to his patient was unremitting, everything that human skill, joined to long experience and natural talent, could do to restore the young man to his family was done ; and in the course of a few weeks the friends of Reillaghan had the satisfaction of seeing him completely out of danger.

Mike declared, after his recovery, that though incapable of motion on the mountains, he was not altogether insensible to what passed around him. The loud tones of their conversation he could hear. The oath which young M'Kenna uttered in a voice so wild and exalted, fell clearly on his ear, and he endeavoured to contradict it, in order that he might be secured and punished in the event of his death. He also said, that the pain he suffered in the act of being conveyed home, occasioned him to groan feebly ; but that the sobs, and cries, and loud conversation of those who surrounded him, prevented his moans from being heard. It is probable, after all, that were it not for the accidental fall of Owen upon his body, he might not have survived the wound, inasmuch as the medical skill, which contributed to restore him, would not have been called in.

Though old Frank M'Kenna and his family felt an oppressive load of misery taken off their hearts by the prospect of Reillaghan's recovery, yet it was impossible for them to be insensible to the fate of their son, knowing as they did, that he must have been out among the mountains during the storm. His unhappy mother and Rody sat up the whole night, expecting his return, but morning arrived without bringing him home. For six days afterwards the search for him was general and strict ; his friends

and neighbours traversed the mountain wastes until they left scarcely an acre of them unexplored. On the sixth day there came a thaw, and towards the close of the seventh, he was found a "stiffened corse," upon the very spot where he had shot his rival, and on which he had challenged the Almighty to stretch him in death, without priest or prayer, if he were guilty of the crime with which he had been charged. He was found lying with a circle drawn round him, his head pillowed upon the innocent blood which he had shed with the intention of murder, and a bloody cross marked upon his breast and forehead. It was thought that in the dread of approaching death he had formed it with his hand, which came accidentally in contact with the blood that lay in clots about him.

The manner of his death excited a profound and wholesome feeling among the people, with respect to the crime which he attempted to commit. The circumstances attending it, and his oath upon the spot where he shot Reillaghan, are still spoken of by the fathers of the neighbouring villages, and even by some who were present at the search for his body. It was also doubly remarkable on account of a case of spectral illusion which it produced, and which was ascribed to the effect of M'Kenna's supernatural appearance at the time. The daughter of a herdsman in the mountains was strongly affected by the spectacle of his dead body borne past her father's door. In about a fortnight afterwards, she assured her family that he appeared to her. She saw the apparition, in the beginning, only at night; but ere long it ventured, as she imagined, to appear in day-light. Many imaginary conversations took place between them; and the fact of the peasantry flocking to the herd's house, to satisfy themselves as to the truth of the rumour, is yet well remembered in the parish. It was also affirmed, that as the funeral of M'Kenna passed to the churchyard, a hare crossed it, which some one present struck on the side with a stone. The hare, says the tradition, was not injured, but the sound of the stroke resembled that produced on striking an empty barrel.

We have nearly wound up our story, in which we have feebly endeavoured to illustrate scenes that were, some time ago, not unusual in Irish life. There is little more to be added, except that Mike Reillaghan almost miraculously recovered; that he and Peggy Gartland were happily married, and that Darby More lost his character as a dreamer in that parish. Mike, with whom, however, he still continued a favourite, used frequently to allude to the *speaking crucifix*, the dream aforesaid, and his bit of fiction, in assuring his mother that he had dissuaded him against "tracing" on that eventful day.

"Well, avourneen," Darby would exclaim, "the holiest of us has our failins; but, in throth, the truth of it is, that myself didn't know what I was sayin', I was so *through other**; for I remimber that I was badly afflicted with this thief of a configuration inwardly at the time. That, you see, and your own throbbles, put my mind *ashaughran* † for a start. But, upon my sanctity,—an' sure that's a great oath wid me—only for the Holy Carol you bought from me the night before, an' above all,

* Agitated

† Ashaughran—astray.

touchin' you wid the blessed Cruciwhix, you'd never a' got over the same accident. Oh, you may smile an' shake your head, but it's thruth whether or not! Glory be to God!"

The priest of the parish, on ascertaining correctly the incidents mentioned in this sketch, determined to deprive the people of at least one pretext for their follies. He represented the abuses connected with such a ceremony to the bishop; and from that night to the present time, the inhabitants of Kilnaheery never had, in their own parish, an opportunity of hearing a Midnight Mass.





THE DONAH.

OR, THE HORSE-STEALERS.

CARNMORE, one of those small villages that are to be found in the outskirts of many parishes in Ireland, whose distinct boundaries are lost in the contiguous mountain-wastes, was situated at the foot of a deep gorge, or pass, overhung by two bleak hills, from the naked sides of which the storm swept over it, without discomposing the peaceful little nook of cabins that stood below. About a furlong farther down were two or three

farm-houses, inhabited by a family named Cassidy, men of simple, inoffensive manners, and considerable wealth. They were, however, acute and wise in their generation; intelligent cattle-dealers, on whom it would have been a matter of some difficulty to impose an unsound horse, or a cow older than was intimated by her horn-rings, even when conscientiously dressed up for sale by the ingenious aid of the file or burning-iron. Between their houses and the hamlet rose a conical pile of rocks, loosely heaped together, from which the place took its name of Carnmore.

About three years before the time of this story, there came two men with their families to reside in the upper village, and the house which they

chose as a residence was one at some distance from those which composed the little group we have just been describing. They said their name was Meehan, although the general report went, that this was not true; that the name was an assumed one, and that some dark mystery, which none could penetrate, shrouded their history and character. They were certainly remarkable men. The elder, named Anthony, was a dark, black-browed person, stern in his manner, and atrociously cruel in his disposition. His form was Herculean, his bones strong and hard as iron, and his sinews stood out in undeniable evidence of a life hitherto spent in severe toil and exertion, to bear which he appeared to an amazing degree capable. His brother Denis was a small man, less savage and daring in his character, and consequently more vacillating and cautious than Anthony; for the points in which he resembled him were superinduced upon his natural disposition by the close connexion that subsisted between them, and by the identity of their former pursuits in life, which, beyond doubt, had been such as could not bear investigation.

The old proverb of "birds of a feather flock together," is certainly a true one, and in this case it was once more verified. Before the arrival of these men in the village, there had been two or three bad characters in the neighbourhood, whose delinquencies were pretty well known. With these persons the strangers, by that sympathy which assimilates with congenial good or evil, soon became acquainted; and although their intimacy was as secret and cautious as possible, still it had been observed, and was known; for they had frequently been seen skulking together at daybreak, or in the dusk of evening.

It is unnecessary to say that Meehan and his brother did not mingle much in the society of Carnmore. In fact, the villagers and they mutually avoided each other. A mere return of the common phrases of salutation was generally the most that passed between them: they never entered into that familiarity which leads to mutual intercourse, and justifies one neighbour in freely entering the cabin of another, to spend a winter's night, or a summer's evening, in amusing conversation. Few had ever been in the house of the Meehans since it became theirs; nor were the means of their subsistence known. They led an idle life, had no scarcity of food, were decently clothed, and never wanted money; circumstances which occasioned no small degree of conjecture in Carnmore and its vicinity.

Some said they lived by theft; others that they were coiners; and there were many who imagined, from the diabolical countenance of the elder brother, that he had sold himself to the devil, who, they affirmed, set his mark upon him, and was his paymaster. Upon this hypothesis several were ready to prove that he had neither breath nor shadow: they had seen him, they said, standing under a hedge-row of *elder*—that unholy tree which furnished wood for the cross, and on which Judas hanged himself—yet, although it was noon-day in the month of July, his person threw out no shadow. Worthy souls! because the man stood in the shade at the time. But with these simple explanations Superstition had nothing to do, although we are bound in justice to the reverend old lady to affirm that she was kept exceedingly busy in Carnmore. If a man had

a sick cow, she was elf-shot; if his child became consumptive, it had been overlooked, or received a *blast* from the fairies; if the hooping-cough was rife, all the afflicted children were put three times under an ass; or when they happened to have the "mumps," were led, before sunrise, to a south-running stream, with a halter hanging about their necks, under an obligation of silence during the ceremony. In short, there could not possibly be a more superstitious spot than that which these men of mystery had selected for their residence. Another circumstance which caused the people to look upon them with additional dread, was their neglect of mass on Sundays and holidays, though they avowed themselves Roman Catholics. They did not, it is true, join in the dances, drinking-matches, foot-ball, and other sports with which the Carnmore folk celebrated the Lord's-day; but they scrupled not, on the other hand, to mend their garden-ditch or mould a row of cabbages on the Sabbath—a circumstance for which two or three of the Carnmore boys were, one Sunday evening when tipsy, well-nigh chastising them. Their usual manner, however, of spending that day was by sauntering lazily about the fields, or stretching themselves supinely on the sunny side of the hedges, their arms folded on their bosoms, and their hats lying over their faces to keep off the sun.

In the mean time, loss of property was becoming quite common in the neighbourhood. Sheep were stolen from the farmers, and cows and horses from the more extensive graziers in the parish. The complaints against the authors of these depredations were loud and incessant: watches were set, combinations for mutual security formed, and subscriptions to a considerable amount entered into, with a hope of being able, by the temptation of a large reward, to work upon the weakness or cupidity of some accomplice to betray the gang of villains who infested the neighbourhood. All, however, was in vain; every week brought some new act of plunder to light, perpetrated upon such unsuspecting persons as had hitherto escaped the notice of the robbers; but no trace could be discovered of the perpetrators. Although theft had from time to time been committed upon a small scale before the arrival of the Meehans in the village, yet it was undeniable that since that period the instances not only multiplied, but became of a more daring and extensive description. They arose in a gradual scale, from the hen-roost to the stable; and with such ability were they planned and executed, that the people, who in every instance identified Meehan and his brother with them, began to believe and hint that, in consequence of their compact with the devil, they had power to render themselves invisible. Common Fame, who can best treat such subjects, took up this, and never laid it aside until, by narrating several exploits which Meehan the elder was said to have performed in other parts of the kingdom, she wound it up by roundly informing the Carnmarians, that, having been once taken prisoner for murder, he was caught by the leg, when half through a hedge, but that, being most wickedly determined to save his neck, he left the leg with the officer who took him, shouting out that it was a new species of leg-bail; and yet he moved away with surprising speed, upon two of as good legs as any man in his majesty's dominions might wish to walk off upon, from the insinuating advances of a bailiff or a constable!

The family of the Meehans consisted of their wives and three children, two boys and a girl ; the former were the offspring of the younger brother, and the latter of Anthony. It has been observed, with truth and justice, that there is no man, how hardened and diabolical soever in his natural temper, who does not exhibit to some particular object a peculiar species of affection. Such a man was Anthony Meehan. That sullen hatred which he bore to human society, and that inherent depravity of heart which left the trail of vice and crime upon his footsteps, were flung off his character when he addressed his daughter Anne. To him her voice was like music ; to her he was not the reckless villain, treacherous and cruel, which the helpless and unsuspecting found him ; but a parent kind and indulgent as ever pressed an only and beloved daughter to his bosom. Anne was handsome : had she been born and educated in an elevated rank in society, she would have been softened by the polish and luxury of life into perfect beauty : she was, however, utterly without education. As Anne experienced from her father no unnatural cruelty, no harshness, nor even indifference, she consequently loved him in return ; for she knew that tenderness from *such* a man was a proof of parental love rarely to be found in life. Perhaps she loved not her father the less on perceiving that he was proscribed by the world ; a circumstance which might also have enhanced in his eyes the affection she bore him. When Meehan came to Carnmore, she was sixteen ; and, as that was three years before the incident occurred on which we have founded this narrative, the reader may now suppose her to be about nineteen ; an interesting country girl as to person, but with a mind completely neglected, yet remarkable for an uncommon stock of good-nature and credulity.

About the hour of eleven o'clock, one winter's night in the beginning of December, Meehan and his brother sat moodily at their hearth. The fire was of peat which had recently been put down, and, from between the turf, the ruddy blaze was shooting out in those little tongues and gusts of sober light, which throw around the rural hearth one of those charms which make up the felicity of domestic life. The night was stormy, and the wind moaned and howled along the dark hills beneath which the cottage stood. Every object in the house was shrouded in a mellow shade, which afforded to the eye no clear outline, except around the hearth alone, where the light brightened into a golden hue, giving the idea of calmness and peace. Anthony Meehan sat on one side of it, and his daughter opposite him, knitting : before the fire sat Denis, drawing shapes in the ashes for his own amusement.

"Bless me," said he, "how strange it is !"

"What is ?" inquired Anthony, in his deep and grating tones.

"Why, thin, it *is* strange !" continued the other, who, despite of the severity of his brother, was remarkably superstitious—"a coffin I made in the ashes three times runnin' ! Isn't it very quare, Anne ?" he added, addressing the niece.

"Strange enough, of a sartinty," she replied, being unwilling to express before her father the alarm which the incident, slight as it was, created in her mind ; for she, like her uncle, was subject to such ridiculous influences. "How did it happen, uncle ?"

"Why, thin, no way in life, Anne; only, as I was thryin' to make a shoe, it turned out a coffin on my hands. I thin smoothed the ashes, and began agin, an' sorra bit of it but was a coffin still. Well, says I, I'll give you another chance,—here goes once more;—an', as sure as gun's iron, it was a coffin the third time. Heaven be about us, it's odd enough!"

"It would be little matther you were nailed down in a coffin," replied Anthony, fiercely; "the world would have little loss. What a pitiful cowardly rascal you are! Afraid o' your own shadow afther the sun goes down, except *I'm* at your elbow! Can't you dhrive all them palavers out o' your head? Didn't the sargint tell us, an' prove to us, the time we broke the guard-house, an' took Frinch lave o' the ridgment for good, that the whole o' that, an' more along wid it, is all priestcraft?"

"I remimber he did, sure enough: I dunna where the same sargint is now, Tony? About no good, any way, I'll be bail. Howsomever, in regard o' that, why doesn't yourself give up fastin' from the mate of a Friday?"

"Do you want me to sthretch you on the hearth?" replied the savage, whilst his eyes kindled into fury, and his grim visage darkened into a satanic expression. "I'll tache you to be puttin' me through my catechiz about atin' mate. I may manage that as I plase; it comes at first-cost, any how: but no cross-questions to me about it, if you regard your health!"

"I must say for you," replied Denis, reproachfully, "that you're a good warrant to put the health astray upon us of an odd start: we're not come to this time o' day widout carryin' somethin' to remimber you by. For my own part, Tony, I don't like such tokens; an' moreover, I wish you had resaved a thrifle o' larnin', espishily in the writin' line; for whenever we have any difference, you're so ready to prove your opinion by settin' your mark upon me, that I'd rather, fifty times over, you could write it with pen an' ink."

"My father will give that up, uncle," said the niece; "it's bad for any body to be fightin', but worst of all for brothers, that ought to live in peace and kindness. Won't you, father?"

"Maybe I will, dear, some o' these days, on your account, Anne; but you must get this creature of an uncle of yours to let me alone, an' not be aggravatin' me with his folly. As for your mother, she's worse; her tongue's sharp enough to skin a flint, and a batin' a day has little effect on her."

Anne sighed, for she knew how low an irreligious life, and the infamous society with which, as her father's wife, her mother was compelled to mingle, had degraded her.

"Well but, father, you don't set her a good example yourself," said Anne; "and if she scoulds and drinks *now*, you know she was a different woman when you got her. You allow this yourself; and the crathur, the dhrunkest time she is, doesn't she cry bitterly, remimberin' what she *has* been. Instead of *one* batin' a day, father, thry *no* batin' a day, an' maybe it 'ill turn out better, than thumpin' an' smashin' her, as you do."

"Why, thin, there's thruth an' sinse in what the girl says, Tony," observed Denis.

"Come," replied Anthony, "whatever *she* may say, I'll suffer none of *your* interference. Go an' get us the black bottle from the *place*; it'll soon be time to move. I hope *they* won't stay too long."

Denis obeyed this command with great readiness, for whiskey in some degree blunted the fierce passions of his brother, and deadened his cruelty; or rather diverted it from minor objects to those which occurred in the lawless perpetration of his villany.

The bottle was got, and in the mean time the fire blazed up brightly; the storm without, however, did not abate, nor did Meehan and his brother wish that it should. As the elder of them took the glass from the hands of the other, an air of savage pleasure blazed in his eyes, on reflecting that the tempest of the night was favourable to the execution of the villanous deed on which they were bent.

"More power to you!" said Anthony, impiously personifying the storm: "sure that's *one* proof that God doesn't trouble his head about what we do, or we would not get such a murderin' fine night as is in it, any how. That's it! blow an' tunder away, an' keep yourself an' us as black as hell, sooner than we should fail in what we intend! Anne, your health, acushla!—Yours, Dinny! If you keep your tongue off o' me, I'll neither make nor meddle in regard o' the batin' o' you."

"I hope you'll stick to that, any how," replied Denis; "for my part I'm sick and sore o' you every day in the year. Many another man would put salt wather between himself and yourself, sooner nor become a battin'-stone for you, as I have been. Few would bear it, when they could mend themselves."

"What's that you say?" replied Anthony, suddenly laying down his glass, catching his brother by the collar, and looking him with a murderous scowl in the face. "Is it thrachery you hint at?—eh? Sarpent, is it thrachery you mane?" and as he spoke, he compressed Denis's neck between his powerful hands, until the other was black in the face.

Anne flew to her uncle's assistance, and with much difficulty succeeded in rescuing him from the deadly gripe of her father, who exclaimed, as he loosed his hold, "You may thank the girl, or you'd not spake, nor dare to spake, about crossin' the salt-wather, or lavin' me in a desatful way agin. If I ever suspect that a thought of thrachery comes into your heart, I'll *do* for you; and you may carry your story to the world I'll send you to."

"Father dear, why are you so suspicious of my uncle?" said Anne; "sure he's a long time livin' with you, an' goin' step for step in all the danger you meet with. If he had a mind to turn out a Judas agin you, he might a done it long agone; not to minton the trouble it would bring on his own head, seein' he's as deep in every thing as you are."

"If that's all that's throubling you," replied Denis, trembling, "you may make yourself asy on the head of it; but well I know 'tisn't *that* that's on your mind; 'tis your own conscience; but sure it's not fair nor rasonable for you to vent your evil thoughts on me!"

"Well, he won't," said Anne, "he'll quit it; his mind's throubled;



"Is it thrachery you hint at? eh, Sarpint?"

The Thracery of the Poets



an', dear knows, it's no wondher it should. Och, I'd give the world wide that his conscience was lightened of the load that's upon it! My mother's lameness is nothin'; but the child, poor thing! An' it was only widin three days of her lyin'-in. Och, it was a cruel sthroke, father! An' when I seen its little innocent face, dead, an' me widout a brother, I thought my heart would break, thinkin' upon who did it!" The tears fell in showers from her eyes, as she added, ' Father, I don't want to vex you; but I wish you to feel sorrow for *that* at laste. Oh, if you'd bring the priest, an' give up sich coorses, father dear, how happy we'd be, an' how happy yourself 'ud be!"

Conscience for a moment started from her sleep, and uttered a cry of guilt in his spirit: his face became ghastly, and his eyes full of horror: his lips quivered, and he was about to upbraid his daughter with more harshness than usual, when a low whistle, resembling that of a curlew, was heard at a chink of the door. In a moment he gulped down another glass of spirits, and was on his feet: "Go, Denis, an' get the arms," said he to his brother, "while I let them in."

On opening the door, three men entered, having their great-coats muffled about them, and their hats slouched. One of them, named Kenny, was a short villain, but of a thick-set, hairy frame. The other was known as "the Big Mower," in consequence of his following that employment every season, and of his great skill in performing it. He had a deep-rooted objection against permitting the palm of his hand to be seen; a reluctance which common fame attributed to the fact of his having received on that part the impress of a hot iron, in the shape of the letter T, not forgetting to add, that T was the hieroglyphic for Thief. The villain himself affirmed it was simply the mark of a cross, burned into it by a blessed friar, as a charm against St. Vitus's dance, to which he had once been subject. The people, however, were rather sceptical, not of the friar's power to cure that malady, but of the fact of his ever having moved a limb under it; and they concluded with telling him, good-humouredly enough, that notwithstanding the charm, he was destined to die "wid the threble of it in his toe." The third was a noted pedlar called Martin, who, under pretence of selling tape, pins, scissors, &c., was very useful in *setting* such premises as this virtuous fraternity might, without much risk, make a descent upon.

"I thought yez would out-stay your time," said the elder Meehan, relapsing into his determined hardihood of character; "we're ready, hours agone. Dick Rice gave me two curlew an' two patrich calls to-day. Now pass the glass among yez, while Denny brings the arms. I know there's danger in this business, in regard of the Cassidys livin' so near us. If I see anybody afut, I'll use the *curlew* call; an' if not, I'll whistle twice on the *patrich** one, an' ye may come an. The horse is worth eighty guineas, if he's worth a shillin'; an' we'll make sixty of him ourselves."

For some time they chatted about the plan in contemplation, and drank freely of the spirits, until at length the impatience of the elder Meehan at the delay of his brother became unmanageable. His voice deepened into

* Partridge.

tones of savage passion, as he uttered a series of blasphemous curses against this unfortunate butt of his indignation and malignity. At length he rushed out furiously to know why he did not return ; but, on reaching a secret excavation in the mound against which the house was built, he found, to his utter dismay, that Denis had made his escape by an artificial passage, scooped out of it to secure themselves a retreat in case of surprise or detection. It opened behind the house among a clump of black-thorn and brushwood, and was covered with green turf in such a manner, as to escape the notice of all who were not acquainted with the secret. Meehan's face, on his return, was worked up into an expression truly awful.

"We're sould!" said he ; "but, stop, I'll tache the thraithur what revings is!"

In a moment he awoke his brother's two sons, and dragged them by the neck, one in each hand, to the hearth.

"Your villain of a father's off," said he, "to betray us: go, an' folly him; bring him back, an' he'll be safe from me: but let him become a *stag* agin us, and if I should hunt you both into the bowels of the airth, I'll send yez to a short account. I don't care that," and he snapped his fingers—"ha, ha—no, I don't care that for the law; I know how to dale with it, when it comes! An, what's the stuff about the *other* world, but priestcraft and lies!"

"Maybe," said the Big Mower, "Denis is gone to get the foreway of us, an' to take the horse himself. Our best plan is to lose no time, at all events; so let us hurry, for fraid the night might happen to clear up."

"He!" said Meehan, "he go alone! No: the miserable wretch is afeard of his own shadow. I only wondher he stuck to me so long: but sure he wouldn't, only I bate the courage in, and the fear out of him. You're right, Brian," said he upon reflection, "let us lose no time, but be off. Do ye mind?" he added to his nephews; "Did ye hear me? If you see him, let him come back, an' all will be berrid; but, if he doesn't, you know your fate!" Saying which, he and his accomplices departed amid the howling of the storm.

The next morning, Carnmore, and indeed the whole parish, was in an uproar; a horse, worth eighty guineas, had been stolen in the most daring manner from the Cassidys, and the hue-and-cry was up after the thief or thieves who took him. For several days the search was closely maintained, but without success; not the slightest trace could be found of him or them. The Cassidys could very well bear to lose him; but there were many struggling farmers, on whose property serious depredations had been committed, who could not sustain their loss so easily. It was natural under these circumstances that suspicion should attach to many persons, some of whom had but indifferent characters before, as well as to several who certainly had never deserved suspicion. When a fortnight or so had elapsed, and no circumstances transpired that might lead to discovery, the neighbours, including those who had principally suffered by the robberies, determined to assemble upon a certain day at Cassidy's house, for the purpose of clearing themselves, on oath, of the imputations thrown out against some of them, as accomplices in the thefts. In order, however, that the ceremony should

be performed as solemnly as possible, they determined to send for Father Farrell, and Mr. Nicholson, a magistrate, both of whom they requested to undertake the task of jointly presiding upon this occasion; and, that the circumstance should have every publicity, it was announced from the altar by the priest, on the preceding Sabbath, and published on the church-gate in large legible characters, ingeniously printed with a pen by the village schoolmaster.

In fact, the intended meeting, and the object of it, were already notorious; and much conversation was held upon its probable result, and the measures which might be taken against those who should refuse to swear. Of the latter description there was but one opinion, which was that their refusal in such a case would be tantamount to guilt. The innocent were anxious to vindicate themselves from suspicion: and, as the suspected did not amount to more than a dozen, of course the whole body of the people, including the thieves themselves, who applauded it as loudly as the others, all expressed their satisfaction at the measures about to be adopted. A day was therefore appointed, on which the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, particularly the suspected persons, should come to assemble at Cassidy's house, in order to have the characters of the innocent cleared up, and the guilty, if possible, made known.

On the evening before this took place, were assembled in Meehan's cottage, the elder Meehan, and the rest of the gang, including Denis, who had absconded on the night of the theft.

"Well, well, Denny," said Anthony, who forced his rugged nature into an appearance of better temper, that he might strengthen the timid spirit of his brother against the scrutiny about to take place on the morrow—perhaps, too, he dreaded him—"Well well, Denny, I thought, sure enough, that it was some new piece of cowardice came over you. Just think of him," he added, "shabbin' off, only because he made, with a bit of a rod, three strokes in the ashes that he thought resembled a coffin!—ha, ha, ha!"

This produced a peal of derision at Denis's pusillanimous terror.

"Ay!" said the Big Mower, "he was makin' a coffin, was he? I wondher it wasn't a rope you drew, Denny. If any one dies in the coil, it will be the greatest coward, an' that's yourself."

"You may all laugh," replied Denis, "but I know such things to have a manin'. When my mother died, didn't my father, the heavens be his bed! see a black coach about a week before it? an' sure from the first day she tuck ill, the dead-watch was heard in the house every night: and what was more nor that, she kept *warm* until she went into her grave;* an', accordingly, didn't my sither Shibby die within a year after?"

"It's no matther about thim things," replied Anthony; "it's thruth about the dead-watch, my mother keepin' warm, an' Shibby's death, any way. But on the night we tuck Cassidy's horse, I thought you were

* It is supposed in Ireland, when a corpse retains, for a longer space of time than usual, any thing like animal heat, that some person belonging to the family of the deceased will die within a year.

goin' to betray us : I was surely in a murderin' passion, an' would have done harm, only things turned out as they did."

"Why," said Denis, "the thruth is, I was afeard *some* of us would be shot, an' that the lot would fall on myself ; for the coffin, thinks I, was sent as a warnin'. How-and-ever, I spied about Cassidy's stable, till I seen that the coast was clear ; so whin I heard the low cry of the patrich that Anthony and I agreed on, I joined yez."

"Well, about to-morrow," observed Kenny—"ha, ha, ha!—there'll be lots o' swearin'. Why the whole parish is to switch the primer ; many a thumb and coat-cuff will be kissed in spite of priest or magistrate. I remimber once, whin I was swearin' an *alibi* for long Paddy Murray, that suffered for the M'Gees, I kissed my thumb, I thought, so smoothly, that no one would notice it ; but I had a keen one to dale with, so says he, 'You know for the matther o' that, my good fellow, that you have your *thumb* to kiss every day in the week,' says he, 'but you might salute the *book* out o' dacency and good manners ; not,' says he, 'that you an' it are strangers aither ; for, if I don't mistake, you're an ould hand at swearin' alibis.'

"At all evints, I had to smack the book itself, and it's I, and Barney Green, and Tim Casserly, that did swear stiffly for Paddy, but the thing was too clear agin him. So he suffered, poor fellow, an' died right game, for he said over his *dhrop*—ha, ha, ha—that he was as innocent o' the murder as a child unborn : an' so he was in *one* sinse, bein' afther gettin' absolution."

"As to thumb-kissin'," observed the elder Meehan ; "let there be none of it among us to-morrow ; if we're caught at it 'twould be as bad as stayin' away altogether ; for my part, I'll give it a smack like a pistol-shot—ha, ha, ha!"

"I hope they won't bring the priest's book," said Denis. "I haven't the laste objection agin payin' my respects to the *magistrate's* paper, but somehow I don't like tastin' the *priest's* in a falsity."

"Don't you know," said the Big Mower, "that whin a magistrate's present, it's ever an' always only the Tistament *by law* that's used. I myself wouldn't kiss the mass-book in a falsity."

"There's none of us sayin' we'd do it in a lie," said the elder Meehan ; "an' it's well for thousands that the law doesn't use the priest's book ; though, after all, aren't there books that say religion's all a sham ? I think myself it is ; for if what they talk about justice an' Providence is thrue, would Tom Dillon be transported for the robbery *we* committed at Bantry ? Tom, it's true, was an ould offender ; but he was innocent of *that*, any way. The world's all chance, boys, as sargint Eustace used to say, and whin we die there's no more about us ; so that I don't see why a man mightn't as well *switch* the priest's book as any other, only that, somehow, a body can't shake the terror of it off o' them."

"I dunna, Anthony, but you an' I ought to curse that sargint ; only for him we mightn't be as we are, sore in our conscience, an' afeard of every fut we hear passin'," observed Denis.

"Spake for your own cowardly heart, man alive," replied Anthony ; "for my part, I'm afeard o' nothin'. Put round the glass, and don't be

nursin' it there all night. Sure we're not so bad as the rot among the sheep, nor the black leg among the bullocks, nor the staggers among the horses, any how; an' yet they'd hang us up only for bein' fond of a bit o' mate—ha, ha, ha!"

"Thru enough," said the Big Mower, philosophizing—"God made the beef and the mutton, and the grass to fed it; but it was man made the ditches: now we're only bringin' things back to the right way that Providence made them in, when ould times were in it, manin' before ditches war invinted—ha, ha, ha!"

"'Tis a good argument," observed Kenny, "only that judge and jury would be a little delicate in actin' up to it; an' the more's the pity. Howsomever, as Providence made the mutton, sure it's not harm for us to take what he sends."

"Ay; but," said Denis,

' God made man, an' man made money;
God made bees, and bees made honey;
God made Satan, an' Satan made sin;
An' God made a hell to put Satan in.'

Let nobody say there's not a hell; isn't there it plain from Scripthur?"

"I wish you had the Scripthur tied about your neck!" replied Anthony—"How fond of it one o' the greatest thieves that ever missed the rope is! Why the fellow could plan a roguery with any man that ever danced the hangman's hornpipe, and yet he be's repatin' bits an' scraps of ould prayers, an' charms, an' stuff. Ay, indeed! Sure he has a varse out o' the Bible, that he thinks can prevent a man from bein' hung up any day!"

While Denny, the Big Mower, and the two Meehans were thus engaged in giving expression to their peculiar opinions, the Pedlar held a conversation of a different kind with Anne.

With the secrets of the family in his keeping, he commenced a rather penitent review of his own life, and expressed his intention of abandoning so dangerous a mode of accumulating wealth. He said that he thanked heaven he had already laid up sufficient for the wants of a reasonable man; that he understood farming and the management of *sheep* particularly well: that it was his intention to remove to a different part of the kingdom, and take a farm; and that nothing prevented him from having done this before, but the want of a helpmate to take care of his establishment: he added, that his present wife was of an intolerable temper, and a greater villain by fifty degrees than himself. He concluded by saying, that his conscience twitched him night and day for living with her, and that by abandoning her immediately, becoming truly religious, and taking Anne in her place, he hoped, he said, to atone in some measure for his former errors.

Anthony, however, having noticed the earnestness which marked the Pedlar's manner, suspected him of attempting to corrupt the principles of his daughter, having forgotten the influence which his own opinions were calculated to produce upon her heart.

"Martin," said he, "'twould be as well you ped attention to what we're sayin' in regard o' the trial to-morrow, as to be palaverin' talk

into the girl's ear that can't be good comin' from *your* lips. Quit it, I say, quit it! *Corp an duowol**—I won't allow such proceedins!"

"Swear till you blister your lips, Anthony," replied Martin: "as for me, bein' no residenthur, I'm not bound to it; an' what's more, I'm not suspected. 'Tis settin' some other bit o' work for yez I'll be, while you're all clearin' yourselves from stealin' honest Cassidy's horse. I wish we had him safely disposed of in the mane time, an' the money for him an' the other beasts in our pockets."

Much more conversation of a similar kind passed between them upon various topics connected with their profligacy and crimes. At length they separated for the night, after having concerted their plan of action for the ensuing scrutiny.

The next morning, before the hour appointed arrived, the parish, particularly the neighbourhood of Carnmore, was struck with deep consternation. Labour became suspended, mirth disappeared, and every face was marked with paleness, anxiety, and apprehension. If two men met, one shook his head mysteriously, and inquired from the other, "Did you hear the news?"

"Ay! ay! the Lord be about us all, I did! an' I pray God that it may lave the cuntry as it came to it!"

"Oh, an' that it may, I humbly make supplication this day!"

If two women met, it was with similar mystery and fear. "*Vread*,† do you know what's at the Cassidys'?"

"Whisht, a-hagur, I do; but let what will happen, sure it's best for us to say nothin'."

"Say! the blessed Virgin forbid! I'd cut my hand off o' me, afore I'd spake a word about it; only that——"

"Whisht! woman—for mercy's sake—don't——"

And so they would separate, each crossing herself devoutly.

The meeting at Cassidy's was to take place that day at twelve o'clock; but, about two hours before the appointed time, Anne, who had been in some of the other houses, came into her father's, quite pale, breathless and trembling.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, with clasped hands, whilst the tears fell fast from her eyes, "we'll be lost, ruined;—did yez hear what's in the neighbourhood wid the Cassidys'?"

"Girl," said the father, with more severity than he had ever manifested to her before; "I never yit *ris* my hand to you, but *ma corp an duowol*, if you open your lips, I'll *fell* you where you stand. Do you want that cowardly uncle o' yours to be the manes o' hanging your father? Maybe that was one o' the lessons Martin gave you last night?" And as he spoke he knit his brows at her with that murderous scowl which was habitual to him. The girl trembled, and began to think that since her father's temper deepened in domestic outrage and violence as his crimes multiplied, the sooner she left the family the better. Every day, indeed, diminished that species of instinctive affection which she had entertained towards him; and this, in proportion as her reason ripened into a capacity

* My body to Satan!

† *Vread*—*Anglice*, Margaret.

for comprehending the dark materials of which his character was composed. Whether he himself began to consider detection at hand, or not, we cannot say ; but it is certain, that his conduct was marked with a callous recklessness of spirit, which increased in atrocity to such a degree, that even his daughter could only *not* look on him with *disgust*.

"What's the matter now?" inquired Denis, with alarm: "is it any thing about us, Anthony?"

"No, 'tish't," replied the other, "anything about us! What 'ud it be about us for? 'Tis a lyin' report that some cunnin' knave spread, hopin' to find out the guilty. But hear me, Denis, once for all; we're goin' to clear ourselves—now listen—an' let my words sink deep into your heart: if you refuse to swear this day—no matter *what's* put into your hand—you'll do harm—that's all: have courage, man; but should you *cow*, your coorse will be short; an' mark, even if *you* escape me, your sons won't: I have it all planned; an' *corp an duuool!* thim you won't know from Adam will revenge me, if I'm taken up through your unmanliness."

"'Twould be better for us to lave the counthry," said Anne; "we might slip away as it is."

"Ay," said the father, "an' be taken by the neck afore we'd get two miles from the place! no, no, girl; it's the safest way to brazen thim out. Did you hear me, Denis?"

Denis started, for he had been evidently pondering on the mysterious words of Anne, to which his brother's anxiety to conceal them gave additional mystery. The coffin, too, recurred to him; and he feared that the death shadowed out by it, would in some manner or other occur in the family. He was, in fact, one of those miserable villains with but half a conscience;—that is to say, as much as makes them the slaves of the fear which results from crime, without being the slightest impediment to their committing it. It was no wonder he started at the deep pervading tones of his brother's voice, for the question was put with ferocious energy.

On starting, he looked with vague terror on his brother, fearing, but not comprehending, his question.

"What is it, Anthony?" he inquired.

"Oh, for that matter," replied the other, "nothin' at all: think of what I said to you, any how; swear through thick an' thin, if you have a regard for your own health, or for your childer. Maybe I had better repate it agin for you?" he continued, eying him with mingled fear and suspicion. "Denis, as a friend, I bid you mind yourself this day, an' see you don't bring either of us into throuble."

There lay before the Cassidys' houses a small flat of common, trodden into rings by the young horses they were in the habit of training. On this level space were assembled those who came, either to clear their own character from suspicion, or to witness the ceremony. The day was dark and lowering, and heavy clouds rolled slowly across the peaks of the surrounding mountains; scarcely a breath of air could be felt; and, as the country people silently approached, such was the closeness of the day, their haste to arrive in time, and their general anxiety, either for them-

selves or their friends, that almost every man, on reaching the spot, might be seen taking up the skirts of his "cothamore," or "big coat," (the peasant's handkerchief), to wipe the sweat from his brow; and as he took off his dingy woollen hat, or caubeen, the perspiration rose in strong exhalations from his head.

"Michael, am I in time?" might be heard from such persons, as they arrived: "did this business begin yit?"

"Full time, Larry; myself's here an hour ago, but no appearance of anything as yit. Father Farrell an' Squire Nicholson are both in Cassidy's waitin' till they're all *gothar*, whin they'll begin to put thim through their facins. You hard about what they've got?"

"No; for I'm only on my way home from the berril of a *cleaven* of mine, that we put down this mornin' in Tullyard. What is it?"

"Why, man alive, it's through the whole parish *inready*;"—he then went on, lowering his voice to a whisper, and speaking in a tone bordering on dismay.

The other crossed himself, and betrayed symptoms of awe and astonishment, not unmingled with fear.

"Well," he replied, "I dunna whether I'd come here, if I'd known that; for, innocent or guilty, I wouldn't wish to be near it. Och, may God pity thim that's to come across it, espishily if they dare to do it in a lie!"

"They needn't, I can tell yez both," observed a third person, "be a hair afeard of it, for the best rason livin', that there's no thruth at all in the report, nor the Cassidy's never thought of sindin' for anything o' the kind: I have it from Larry Cassidy's own lips, an' he ought to know best."

The truth is, that two reports were current among the crowd: one, that the oath was to be simply on the Bible; and the other, that a more awful means of expurgation was resorted to by the Cassidy's. The people, consequently, not knowing which to credit, felt that most painful of all sensations—uncertainty.

During the period which intervened between their assembling and the commencement of the ceremony, a spectator, interested in contemplating the workings of human nature in circumstances of deep interest, would have had ample scope for observation. The occasion was to them a solemn one. There was little conversation among them; for when a man is wound up to a pitch of great interest, he is seldom disposed to relish discourse. Every brow was anxious, every cheek blanched, and every arm folded: they scarcely stirred, or when they did, only with slow abstracted movements, rather mechanical than voluntary. If an individual made his appearance about Cassidy's door, a sluggish stir among them was visible, and a low murmur of a peculiar character might be heard; but on perceiving that it was only some ordinary person, all subsided again into a brooding stillness that was equally singular and impressive.

Under this peculiar feeling was the multitude, when Meehan and his brother were seen approaching it from their own house. The elder, with folded arms, and hat pulled over his brows, stalked grimly forward, having that remarkable scowl upon his face, which had contributed to

establish for him so diabolical a character. Denis walked by his side, with his countenance strained to inflation;—a miserable parody of that sullen effrontery which marked the unshrinking miscreant beside him. He had not heard of the ordeal, owing to the caution of Anthony; but, notwithstanding his effort at indifference, a keen eye might have observed the latent anxiety of a man who was habitually villanous, and naturally timid.

When this pair entered the crowd, a few secret glances, too rapid to be noticed by the people, passed between them and their accomplices. Denis, on seeing them present, took fresh courage, and looked with the heroism of a blusterer upon those who stood about him, especially whenever he found himself under the scrutinizing eye of his brother. Such was the horror and detestation in which they were held, that on advancing into the assembly, the persons on each side turned away, and openly avoided them: eyes full of fierce hatred were bent on them vindictively, and “curses, not loud, but deep,” were muttered with an indignation which nothing but a divided state of feeling could repress within due limits. Every glance, however, was paid back by Anthony with interest, from eyes and black shaggy brows tremendously ferocious; and his curses, as they rolled up half smothered from his huge chest, were deeper and more diabolical by far than their own. He even jeered at them; but, however disgusting his frown, there was something truly appalling in the dark gleam of his scoff, which threw them at an immeasurable distance behind him, in the power of displaying on the countenance the worst of human passions.

At length Mr. Nicholson, Father Farrell, and his curate, attended by the Cassidys and their friends, issued from the house: two or three servants preceded them, bearing a table and chairs for the magistrate and priests, who, however, stood during the ceremony. When they entered one of the rings before alluded to, the table and chairs were placed in the centre of it, and Father Farrell, as possessing most influence over the people, addressed them very impressively.

“There are,” said he, in conclusion, “persons in this crowd whom we know to be guilty; but we will have an opportunity of now witnessing the lengths to which crime, long indulged in, can carry them. To such people I would say, *beware!* for they know not the situation in which they are placed.”

During all this time there was not the slightest allusion made to the mysterious ordeal which had excited so much awe and apprehension among them—a circumstance which occasioned many a pale, downcast face to clear up, and reassume its usual cheerful expression. The crowd now were assembled around the ring, and every man on whom an imputation had been fastened came forward, when called upon, to the table at which the priests and magistrate stood uncovered. The form of the oath was framed by the two clergymen, who, as they knew the reservations and evasions commonest among such characters, had ingeniously contrived not to leave a single loophole through which the consciences of those who belonged to this worthy fraternity might escape.

To those acquainted with Irish courts of justice there was nothing

particularly remarkable in the swearing. Indeed, one who stood among the crowd might hear from those who were stationed at the greatest distance from the table, such questions as the following:—

“Is the *thing* in it, Art?”

“No; ‘tis nothin’ but the *law* Bible, the magistrate’s own one.”

To this the querist would reply, with a satisfied nod of the head, “Oh, is that all? I heard they war to have *it*,” on which he would push himself through the crowd until he reached the table, where he took his oath as readily as another.

“Jem Hartigan,” said the magistrate, to one of those persons, “are you to swear?”

“Faix, myself doesn’t know, your honour; only that I hard them say that the Cassidys mintoned our names along wid many other honest people; an’ one wouldn’t, in that case, lie under a false report, your honour, from any one, when we’re as clear as them that never saw the light of anything of the kind.”

The magistrate then put the book into his hand, and Jem, in return, fixed his eye, with much apparent innocence, on his face: “Now, Jem Hartigan,” &c. &c. and the oath was accordingly administered. Jem put the book to his mouth, with his thumb raised to an acute angle on the back of it; nor was the smack by any means a silent one which he gave it, (his thumb).

The magistrate set his ear with the air of a man who had experience in discriminating such sounds. “Hartigan,” said he, “you’ll condescend to kiss the *book*, Sir, if you please: there’s a hollowness in that smack, my good fellow, that can’t escape *me*.”

“Not kiss it, your honour? why, by this staff in my hand, if ever a man kissed”—

“Silence! you impostor,” said the curate; “I watched you closely, and am confident your lips never touched the book.”

“My lips *never* touched the book!—Why, you know I’d be sarry to conthradict either o’ yez; but I was jist goin’ to absarve, wid simmission, that my own lips ought to know best; an’ don’t you hear them tellin’ you that they *did* kiss it?” and he grinned with confidence in their faces.

“You double-dealing reprobate!” said the parish priest, “I’ll lay my whip across your jaws. I saw you, too, an’ you did *not* kiss the book.”

“By dad, an’ maybe I did *not*, sure enough,” he replied: “any man may make a mistake unknownst to himself; but I’d give my oath, an’ be the five crasses, I kissed it as sure as—however, a good thing’s never the worse o’ bein’ twice done, gentlemen; so here goes, jist to satisfy yez;” and, placing the book near his mouth, and altering his position a little, he appeared to comply, though, on the contrary, he touched neither it nor his thumb. “It’s the same thing to me,” he continued, laying down the book with an air of confident assurance; “it’s the same thing to me if I kissed it fifty times over, which I’m ready to do if *that* doesn’t satisfy yez.”

As every man acquitted himself of the charges brought against him, the curate immediately took down his name. Indeed, before the “clearing” commenced, he requested that such as were to swear would stand together within the ring, that, after having sworn, he might hand each of them a

certificate of the fact, which they appeared to think might be serviceable to them, should they happen to be subsequently indicted for the same crime in a court of justice. This, however, was only a plan to keep them together for what was soon to take place.

The detections of thumb-kissing were received by those who had already sworn, and by several in the outward crowd, with much mirth. It is but justice, however, to the majority of those assembled to state, that they appeared to entertain a serious opinion of the nature of the ceremony, and no small degree of abhorrence against those who seemed to trifle with the solemnity of an oath.

Standing on the edge of the circle, in the innermost row, were Meehan and his brother. The former eyed, with all the hardness of a Stoic, the successive individuals as they passed up to the table. His accomplices had gone forward, and to the surprise of many who strongly suspected them, in the most indifferent manner "cleared" themselves in the trying words of the oath, of all knowledge of, and participation in, the thefts that had taken place.

The grim visage of the elder Meehan was marked by a dark smile, scarcely perceptible; but his brother, whose nerves were not so firm, appeared somewhat confused and distracted by the imperturbable villany of the perjurers.

At length they were called up. Anthony advanced slowly but collectedly, to the table, only turning his eye slightly about, to observe if his brother accompanied him. "Denis," said he, "which of us will swear first? you may;" for, as he doubted his brother's firmness, he was prudent enough, should he fail, to guard against having the sin of perjury to answer for, along with those demands which his country had to make for his other crimes. Denis took the book, and cast a slight glance at his brother as if for encouragement; their eyes met, and the darkened brow of Anthony hinted at the danger of finching in this crisis. The tremor of his hand was not, perhaps, visible to any but Anthony, who, however, did not overlook this circumstance. He held the book, but raised not his eye to meet the looks of either the magistrate or the priests; the colour also left his face, as with shrinking lips he touched the Word of God in deliberate falsehood. Having then laid it down, Anthony received it with a firm grasp, and whilst his eye turned boldly in contemptuous mockery upon those who presented it, he impressed it with the kiss of a man whose depraved conscience seemed to goad him only to evil. After "clearing" himself, he laid the Bible upon the table with the affected air of a person who felt hurt at the imputation of theft, and joined the rest with a frown upon his countenance, and a smothered curse upon his lips.

Just at this moment, a person from Cassidy's house laid upon the table a small box covered with black cloth; and our readers will be surprised to hear, that if fire had come down visibly from heaven, greater awe and fear could not have been struck into their hearts, or depicted upon their countenances. The casual conversation, and the commentaries upon the ceremony they had witnessed, instantly settled into a most profound silence, and every eye was turned towards it with an interest absolutely fearful.

“ Let,” said the curate, “ none of those who have sworn depart from within the ring, until they *once more* clear themselves upon this;” and as he spoke, he held it up—“ Behold !” said he, “ and tremble—behold THE DONAGH !!!”

A low murmur of awe and astonishment burst from the people in general, whilst those within the ring, who, with few exceptions, were the worst characters in the parish, appeared ready to sink into the earth. Their countenances, for the most part, paled into the condemned hue of guilt ; many of them became almost unable to stand ; and altogether, the state of trepidation and terror in which they stood, was strikingly wild and extraordinary.

The curate proceeded : “ Let him now who is guilty depart ; or if he wishes, advance, and challenge the awful penalty annexed to perjury upon THIS ! Who has ever been known to swear falsely upon the Donagh, without being visited by a tremendous punishment, either on the spot, or in twenty-four hours after his perjury ? If we ourselves have not seen such instances with our own eyes, it is because none liveth who dare incur such a dreadful penalty ; but we have heard of those who did, and of their awful punishment afterwards. Sudden death, madness, paralysis, self-destruction, or the murder of some one dear to them, are the marks by which perjury upon the Donagh is known and visited. Advance, now, ye who are innocent, but let the guilty withdraw ; for we do not desire to witness the terrible vengeance which would attend a false oath upon the DONAGH. Pause, therefore, and be cautious ! for if this grievous sin be committed, a heavy punishment will fall, not only upon you, but upon the parish in which it occurs !”

The words of the priest sounded to the guilty like the death-sentence of a judge. Before he had concluded, all, except Meehan and his brother, and a few who were really innocent, had slunk back out of the circle into the crowd. Denis, however, became pale as a corpse ; and from time to time wiped the large drops from his haggard brow : even Anthony's cheek, despite of his natural callousness, was less red ; his eyes became disturbed ; but by their influence, he contrived to keep Denis in sufficient dread, to prevent him from mingling, like the rest, among the people. The few who remained along with them advanced ; and notwithstanding their innocence, when the Donagh was presented and the figure of Christ and the Twelve Apostles displayed in the solemn tracery of its carving, they exhibited symptoms of fear. With trembling hands they touched the Donagh, and with trembling lips kissed the Crucifix, in attestation of their guiltlessness of the charge with which they had been accused.

“ Anthony and Denis Meehan, come forward,” said the curate, “ and declare your innocence of the crimes with which you are charged by the Cassidys and others.”

Anthony advanced ; but Denis stood rooted to the ground ; on perceiving which, the former sternly returned a step or two, and catching him by the arm with an admonitory grip, that could not easily be misunderstood, compelled him to proceed with himself step by step to the table. Denis, however, could feel the strong man tremble, and perceive that although he strove to lash himself into the energy of despair, and the

utter disbelief of all religious sanction, yet the trial before him called every slumbering prejudice and apprehension of his mind into active power. This was a death-blow to his own resolution, or, rather it confirmed him in his previous determination not to swear on the Donagh, except to acknowledge his guilt, which he could scarcely prevent himself from doing, such was the vacillating state of mind to which he felt himself reduced.

When Anthony reached the table, his huge form seemed to dilate by his effort at maintaining the firmness necessary to support him in this awful struggle between conscience and superstition on the one hand, and guilt, habit, and infidelity, on the other. He fixed his deep, dilated eyes upon the Donagh, in a manner that betokened somewhat of irresolution: his countenance fell; his colour came and went, but eventually settled in a flushed red; his powerful hands and arms trembled so much, that he folded them to prevent his agitation from being noticed: the grimness of his face ceased to be stern, while it retained the blank expression of guilt; his temples swelled out with the terrible play of their blood-vessels, his chest, too, heaved up and down with the united pressure of guilt, and the tempest which shook him within. At length he saw Denis's eye upon him, and his passions took a new direction; he knit his brows at him with more than usual fierceness, ground his teeth, and with a step and action of suppressed fury, he placed his foot at the edge of the table, and bowing down under the eye of God and man, took the awful oath on the mysterious Donagh, in a falsehood! When it was finished, a feeble groan broke from his brother's lips. Anthony bent his eye on him with a deadly glare; but Denis saw it not. The shock was beyond his courage,—he had become insensible.

Those who stood at the outskirts of the crowd, seeing Denis apparently lifeless, thought he must have sworn falsely on the Donagh, and exclaimed, "He's dead! gracious God! Denis Meehan's struck dead by the Donagh! He swore in a lie, and is now a corpse!" Anthony paused, and calmly surveyed him as he lay with his head resting upon the hands of those who supported him. At this moment a silent breeze came over where they stood; and, as the Donagh lay upon the table, the black ribbons with which it was ornamented fluttered with a melancholy appearance, that deepened the sensations of the people into something peculiarly solemn and preternatural. Denis at length revived, and stared wildly and vacantly about him. When composed sufficiently to distinguish and recognise individual objects, he looked upon the gloomy visage and threatening eye of his brother, and shrunk back with a terror almost epileptical. "Oh!" he exclaimed, "save me! save me from that man, and I'll discover all!"

Anthony calmly folded one arm into his bosom, and his lip quivered with the united influence of hatred and despair.

"Hould him!" shrieked a voice, which proceeded from his daughter, "hould my father, or he'll murder him! Oh! oh! merciful Heaven!"

Ere the words were uttered, she had made an attempt to clasp the arms of her parent, whose motions she understood; but only in time to receive from the pistol which he had concealed in his breast, the bullet

aimed at her uncle ! She tottered ! and the blood spouted out of her neck upon her father's brows, who hastily put up his hand and wiped it away, for it had actually blinded him.

The elder Meehan was a tall man, and as he stood, elevated nearly a head above the crowd, his grim brows red with his daughter's blood—which, in attempting to wipe away, he had deeply streaked across his face—his eyes shooting fiery gleams of his late resentment, mingled with the wildness of unexpected horror—as he thus stood, it would be impossible to contemplate a more revolting picture of that state to which the principles that had regulated his life must ultimately lead, even in this world.

On perceiving what he had done, the deep working of his powerful frame was struck into sudden stillness, and he turned his eyes on his bleeding daughter, with a fearful perception of her situation. Now was the harvest of his creed and crimes reaped in blood ; and he felt that the stroke which had fallen upon him was one of those by which God will sometimes bare his arm and vindicate his justice. The reflection, however, shook him not : the reality of his misery was too intense and pervading, and grappled too strongly with his hardened and unbending spirit, to waste its power upon a nerve or a muscle. It was abstracted, and beyond the reach of bodily suffering. From the moment his daughter fell, he moved not : his lips were half open with the conviction produced by the blasting truth of her death, effected prematurely by his own hand.

Those parts of his face which had not been stained with her blood assumed an ashy paleness, and rendered his countenance more terrific by the contrast. Tall, powerful, and motionless, he appeared to the crowd, glaring at the girl like a tiger anxious to join his offspring, yet stunned with the shock of the bullet which has touched a vital part. His iron-gray hair, as it fell in thick masses about his neck, was moved slightly by the blast, and a lock which fell over his temple was blown back with a motion rendered more distinct by his statue-like attitude, immovable as death.

A silent and awful gathering of the people around this impressive scene, intimated their knowledge of what they considered to be a judicial punishment annexed to perjury upon the Donagh. This relic lay on the table, and the eyes of those who stood within view of it, turned from Anthony's countenance to it, and again back to his blood-stained visage, with all the overwhelming influence of superstitious fear. Shuddering, tremblings, crossings, and ejaculations, marked their conduct and feeling ; for though the incident in itself was simply a fatal and uncommon one, yet *they* considered it supernatural and miraculous.

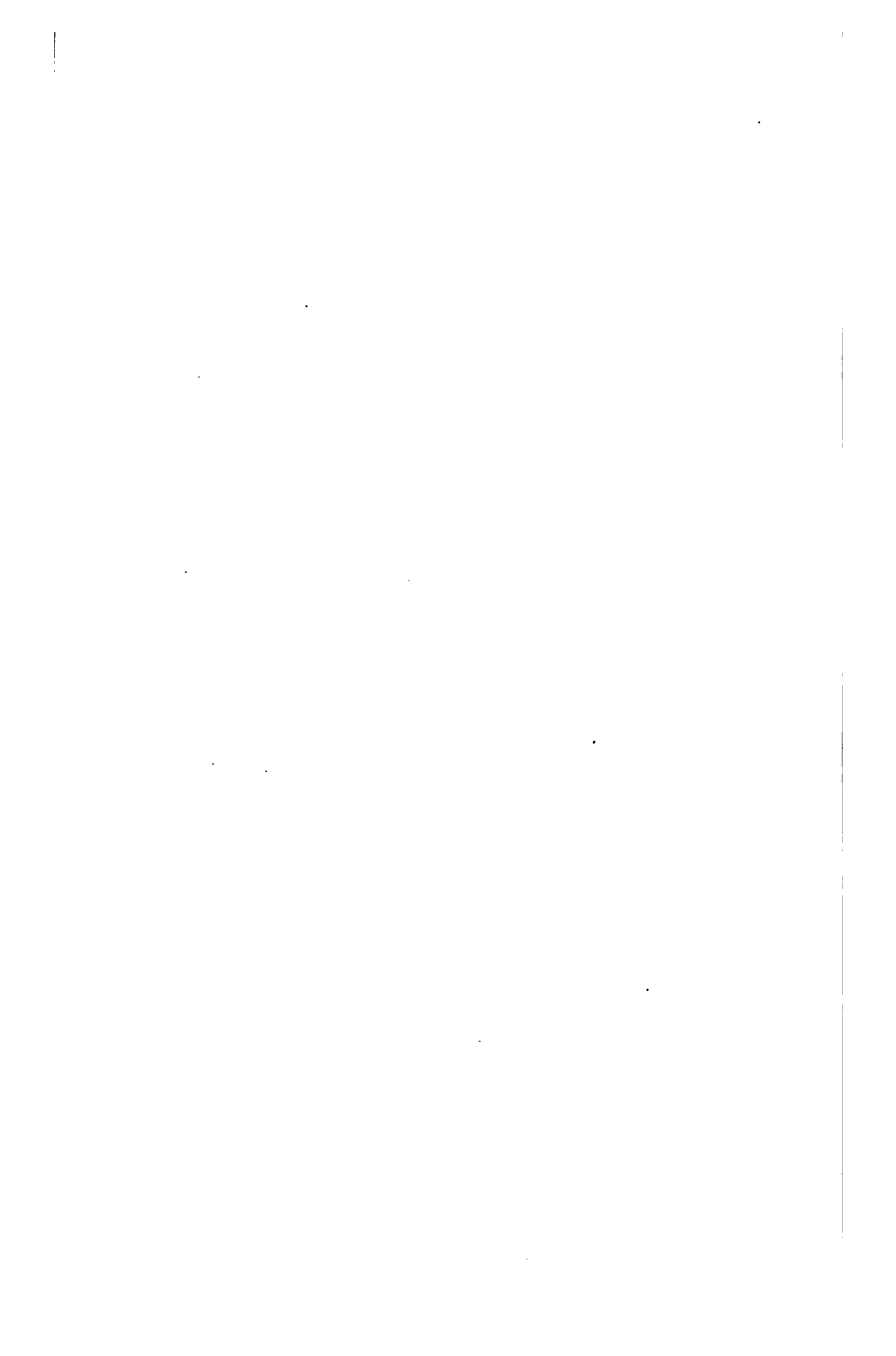
At length a loud and agonizing cry burst from the lips of Meehan—“ Oh, God !—God of heaven an' earth !—have I murdered my daughter ? ” and he cast down the fatal weapon with a force which buried it some inches into the wet clay.

The crowd had closed upon Anne ; but with the strength of a giant he flung them aside, caught the girl in his arms, and pressed her bleeding to his bosom. He gasped for breath : “ Anne,” said he, “ Anne, I am without hope, an' there's none to forgive me except you ;—none at all : from God,



'God of Heaven an' earth! have I murdered my daughter'

THE END OF THE WORLD



to the poorest of his creatures, I am hated an' cursed by all, except you ! Don't curse me, Anne; don't curse me ! Oh, is n't it enough, darlin', that my sowl is now stained with *your* blood, along with my other crimes ? In hell, on earth, an' in heaven, there's none to forgive your father but yourself !—NONE ! NONE ! Oh, what's comin' over me ! I'm dizzy an' shiverin' ! How cowld the day's got of a sudden ! Hould up, *avourneem machree* ! I was a bad man ; but to *you*, Anne, I was *not* as I was to every one ! Darlin', oh, look at me with forgiveness in your eye, or any way don't curse me ! Oh ! I'm far cowlder now ! Tell me that you forgive me, *acushla ogs machree* !—*Manim asthee hu**, darlin', say it. I DAR'N'T LOOK TO GOD ! but oh ! do *you* say the forgivin' word to your father before you die !”

“ Father,” said she, “ I deserve this—it's only just : I had plotted with that divilish Martin to betray them all, except yourself, an' to get the reward ; an' then we intended to go—an'—live at a distance—an' in wickedness—where we—might not be known—he's at our house—let him be—secured. Forgive me, father ;—you said so often that there was no thruth in religion—that I began to—think so. Oh !—God ! have mercy upon me !” And with these words she expired.

Meehan's countenance, on hearing this, was overspread with a ghastly look of the most desolating agony : he staggered back, and the body of his daughter, which he strove to hold, would have fallen from his arms, had it not been caught by the bystanders. His eye sought out his brother, but not in resentment. “ Oh ! she died, but didn't say ‘ I FORGIVE YOU ! ’ Denis,” said he, “ Denis, bring me home—I'm sick—very sick—oh, but it's cowld—everything's reeling—how cowld—cowld it is !”—and as he uttered the last words, he shuddered, fell down in a fit of apoplexy, never to rise again ; and the bodies of his daughter and himself were both waked and buried together.

The result is brief. The rest of the gang were secured : Denis became approver, by whose evidence they suffered that punishment decreed by law to the crimes of which they had been guilty. The two events which we have just related, of course added to the supernatural fear and reverence previously entertained for this terrible relic. It is still used as an ordeal of expurgation, in cases of stolen property ; and we are not wrong in asserting, that many of those misguided creatures, who too frequently hesitate not to swear falsely on the Word of God, would suffer death itself sooner than commit a perjury on the Donagh †.

* Young pulse of my heart ! my soul is within thee !

† The story of the Donagh, the Author has reason to believe, was the means of first bringing this curious piece of antiquity into notice. There is little to be added here to what is in the sketch, concerning its influence over the people, and the use of it as a blessed relic, sought for by those who wished to apply a certain test of guilt or innocence to such well-known thieves as scrupled not to perjure themselves on the Bible. For this purpose it was a perfect conscience-trap, the most hardened miscreant never having been known to risk a false oath upon it. Many singular anecdotes are related concerning it.

The Author feels great pleasure in subjoining two very interesting letters upon the subject—one from an accomplished scholar, the late Rev. Dr. O'Beirne, master of the distinguished school of Portora at Enniskillen ; the other from Sir William Betham, one of the soundest and most learned of our Irish Antiquaries. Both gentlemen differ in their opinion respecting the antiquity of the Donagh ; and, as the Author is incompetent to decide between them, he gives their respective letters to the public.

“Portora, August 15, 1832.

“MY DEAR CARLETON,—It is well you wrote to me about the Dona. Your letter, which reached me this day, has proved that I was mistaken in supposing that the promised drawing was no longer necessary. I had imagined, that as you must have seen the Dona with Mr. Smith, any communication from me on the subject must be superfluous. And now that I have taken up my pen in compliance with your wish, what can I tell you that you have not perhaps conveyed to yourself by ocular inspection, and better than I can detail it?”

“I accompanied Mr. S. to Brookborough, and asked very particularly of the old woman, late the possessor of the Dona, what she knew of its history; but she could say nothing about it, only that it had belonged to ‘the Lord of Enniskillen.’ This was the Fermanagh Maguire, who took an active part in the shocking rebellion of 1641, and was subsequently executed. His castle, the ruins of which are on the grounds of Portora, was stormed during the wars of that miserable time. When I entered on my inquiries for you, I anticipated much in the way of tradition, which, I hoped, might prove amusing at least; but disappointment met me on every hand. The old woman could not even detail distinctly how the Dona had come into her possession: it was brought into her family, she said, by a priest. The country people had imagined wonders relative to the contents of the box. The chief treasure it was supposed to contain was a lock of the Virgin Mary’s hair!!!

“After much inquiry, I received the following vague detail from a person in this county; and let me remark, by the by, that though the possession of the Dona was a matter of boast to the Maguires, yet I could not gain the slightest information respecting it from even the most intelligent of the name. But now for the detail:—

“Donagh O’Hanlon, an inhabitant of the upper part of this county (Fermanagh), went, about 600 years ago, (longer than which time, in the opinion of a celebrated antiquary, the kind of engraving on it could not have been made), on a pious pilgrimage to Rome. His Holiness of the Vatican, whose name has escaped the recollection of the person who gave this information, as a reward for this supererogatory journey, presented him with the Dona. As soon as Donagh returned, the Dona was placed in the monastery of Aughadurcher (now Aughalurcher). But at the time when Cromwell was in this country, the monastery was destroyed, and this *Ark of the Covenant* hid by some of the faithful at a small lake, named Lough Eye, between Lisbellaw and Tempo. It was removed thence when peace was restored, and again placed in some one of the neighbouring chapels, when, as before in Aughadurcher, the oaths were administered with all the superstition that a depraved imagination could invent, as “that their thighs might rot off,” “that they might go mad,” &c., &c.

“When Kings James and William made their appearance, it was again concealed in Lary an old castle at Sir H. Brooke’s deer-park. Father Antony Maguire, a priest of the Romish Church, dug it up from under the stairs in this old castle, after the battle of the Boyne, deposited it in a chapel, and it was used as before.

“After Father Antony’s death it fell into the possession of his niece, who took it over to the neighbourhood of Florence-court. But the Maguires were not satisfied that a thing so sacred should depart from the family, and at their request it was brought back.”

“For the confirmation of the former part of this account, the informant refers you to Sir James Ware. I have not Ware’s book, and cannot therefore tell you how much of this story is given by him, or whether any. In my opinion there is nothing detailed by him at all bearing on the subject. The latter part of the story rests, we are told, on tradition.

“As I confess myself not at all versed in Irish antiquities, it may appear somewhat presumptuous in me to venture an opinion respecting this box and its contents, which is, I understand, opposed to that of our spirited and intelligent antiquary, Sir Wm. Betham. I cannot persuade myself that either the box or the contained MSS. were of such an age as he claims for them. And, first, of the box:—

“At present the MSS. are contained in a wooden box; the wood is, I believe, *yew*. It cannot be pronounced, I think, with any certainty, whether the wooden box was originally part of the shrine of the precious MSS. It is very rude in its construction, and has not a top or lid. Indeed it appears to me to have been a coarse botched-up thing to receive the MSS. after the original box, which was made of brass, had fallen to pieces.

“The next thing that presents itself to us is the remnant of a brass box, washed with silver, and rudely ornamented with tracery. The two ends and the front are all that remain of the brass box.

“You may then notice what was evidently an addition of later times, the highly ornamented gilt-silver work, made fast on the remains of the brass box, and the chased compartments, which seem to have formed the top or lid of the box. But, as you have seen the whole, I need not perhaps have troubled you with this description. I shall only direct your attention to the two inscriptions. In the chasing you will see that they are referred to their *supposed places*.

"The upper inscription, when deciphered, is—

"'Johannes : O'Karri : Comorbanus : S. Tignacii : Pmisti.' For *S. Tignacii* I would conjecture *St. Ignacii*. *P*, I should conjecture to be *Presbyterus*. On this I should be very glad to have Sir William's opinion. I cannot imagine, if *P* stands part of a compound with *misit*, what it can mean. I would read and translate it thus—"John O'Carbery, coadjutor, priest, of the order of St. Ignatius, sent it."

"This inscription is on a narrow slip of silver, and is presumed to have formed part of the under edge of the upper part of the back of the box. The lower inscription is—

'Johannes O'Barrdan fabricavit.'

"This also is on a slip of silver, and appears to have fitted into a space on the upper surface which is supposed to have been the top, and to have lain in between the two square compartments on the left hand : this is marked in the drawing. I have expressed myself here in the language of doubt, for the box is all in confusion.

"Now, on the inscriptions, I would say, that they indicate to me a date much later than some gentlemen who have seen the box are willing to ascribe to it. In the island of Deveniah, in our lake (Lough Erne), is an inscription, that was discovered in the ruins (still standing) of a priory, that was built there A. D. 1449. The characters in this inscription are much more remote from the Roman character in use among us than those used in the inscriptions on the box. The letters on the box bespeak a later period, when English cultivation had begun to produce some effect in our island, and the Roman character was winning its way into general use. I shall probably be able to let you see the Deveniah inscription, and a *justa position* of it and the others will satisfy you, I think, on this point. In my opinion, then, the box, with all its ornaments, must have been made at some time since the year 1449. I cannot think it reasonable to suppose that an inscription, containing many letters like the Roman characters, should be more ancient than one not only having fewer letters resembling them, but also having the letters that differ differing essentially.

"Now for the MSS.

"I am deficient in antiquarian lore : this I have already confessed ; but perhaps I want also the creative fancy and devoted faith of the genuine antiquary. I cannot, for example, persuade myself, that a MS. written in a clear, uniform, *small* character of the Roman form, could have been written in remote times, when there is reason to think that MSS. were written in uncial characters only, without stops, and with few or no divisions into words, sentences, or paragraphs. The palimpsest MS. examined by Dr. Barrett is in uncial characters, and is referred by him to the 6th or 7th century. *Cic. de Republica*, published by Angelo Mai, is assigned to much the same period. Small letters, and the distinctions above mentioned, were the invention of later times. I cannot therefore persuade myself that this MS. is of so early an age as some would ascribe to it, though I will not take it upon me to assign the precise time in which it was written. The characters are decidedly and distinctly those now called the Roman : they have not many abbreviations, as far as I could judge, and they are written with much clearness and regularity. They are not the *littera cursiva*, or those used in writing for the sake of facility and connexion : they seem rather formed more in imitation of printed letters. SECUNDUM—This imperfect attempt to present one of the words, will explain my meaning. But I had better not weary you any more with my crude notions. I shall be very glad to hear your opinion, or that of Sir William Betham, to whom I should bow with all the respect due to talent and worth. I must avow my distrust of Irish antiquities ; yet, allow me to add, that there is no man more willing to be converted from my heresy, if you would call it so, than

"My dear Carleton,

"Your friend and servant,

"A. O'BEIRNE."

"Stradbroke House, October, 1832.

"DEAR SIR,—I have read Dr. O'Beirne's important letter on the Dona : the account he has collected of its recent history is full of interest, and for the most part, I have no doubt, correct. His speculations respecting its antiquity I cannot give my adhesion to, not feeling a doubt myself on the subject. When I have time to investigate it fully, I am satisfied that this box, like the others, of which accounts have already been published, will be found mentioned in the Irish Annals. The inscriptions, however, fully identify the MS. and the box, and show that antiquaries, from the execution of the workmanship and figures on these interesting reliques, often underrate their antiquity—a fault which the world are little inclined to give them credit for, and which they fall into from an anxiety to err on what they consider the side which is least likely to produce the smile of contempt or the sneer of incredulity, forget-

ting that it is the sole business of an antiquarian and historian to speak the truth, disregarding even contempt for so doing.

"I had been somewhat lengthy in my description of the Dona, and from habit, entered into a minute account of all its parts, quite forgetting that you, perhaps, do not possess an appetite for antiquarian detail, and therefore might be better pleased to have a general outline than such a recital. I therefore proceed to give it as briefly as possible, not, however, omitting any material points.

"The Irish word *Domnaċ*, or *Domnach*, which is pronounced *Dona*, means the Lord's day, or the first day in the week, sanctified or consecrated to the service of the Lord. It is also in that sense used for a house, church, or chapel. *Donaghmore* means the great church or chapel dedicated to God. This box, being holy, as containing the Gospels, and having the crucifix thereon, was dedicated or consecrated to the service of God. Like the *Caah*, the *Meeshach*, and *Dhimma's* box, it is of brass, covered with plates of silver, and resembles the two former in having a box of yew inside, which was the original case of the MS. and became venerated so much, on that account, as to be deemed worthy of being inclosed with it in the shrine made by permission of John O'Carberry, Abbot of Clonmacnois in the 14th century.

"The top of the Dona is divided by a cross, on the lower arm of which is a figure of the Saviour; over his head is a shield, divided *per pale*, between two crystal settings; on the dexter, is a hand holding a scourge or whip of three thongs, and on a chief a ring; on the sinister, on a chief the same charge and three crucifixion nails. In the first compartment, or quarter of the cross, are representations of St. Columbkil, St. Bridget, and St. Patrick. In the second, a bishop pierced with two arrows, and two figures of St. Peter and St. Paul. In the third, the archangel Michael treading on the dragon, and the Virgin Mary and the infant Jesus. In the fourth, St. Tigernach handing to his successor, St. Sinellus, the Dona; and a female figure, perhaps Mary Magdalen.

"The front of the Dona is ornamented with three crystal settings, surmounted by grotesque figures of animals. Between these are four horsemen with swords drawn, in full speed.

"The right hand end has a figure of St. Tigernach, and St. John the Baptist. The left hand end a figure of St. Catherine with her wheel.

"The Dona is nine inches and a half long, seven wide, and not quite four thick.

"So far I have been enabled to describe the Dona from the evidently accurate and well executed drawings you were so good as to present to me. Why the description is less particular than it should have been, I shall take another opportunity of explaining to you.

"There are three inscriptions on the Dona: one on a scroll from the hand of the figure of the Baptist, of *ECCE AGNUS DEI*. The two others are on plates of silver, but their exact position on the box is not marked in the drawing, but may be guessed by certain places which the plates exactly fit.

"The first is—

"*JOHANNES: OBARRDAN: FABRICAVIT.*

"The second—

"*JOHS: OKARBRI: COMORBANVS: S. TIGNACH: PMISIT.*

"i. e.

"*John O-Barrdan made this box by the permission of John O Carberry, successor of St. Tigernach.**

"St. Tierny, or St. Tigernach, was third Bishop of Clogher, having succeeded St. Marcartin in the year 506. In the list of bishops, St. Patrick is reckoned the first, and founder of the see. Tigernach died the 4th of April, 548.

"John O'Carbry was abbot of Clones, or Clounish, in the County of Monaghan, and as such was *comorb*, or *corb* *—i. e. successor—of Tigernach, who was founder of the abbey and removed the episcopal seat from Clogher to Clounish. Many of the abbots were also bishops of the see. He died in 1353. How long he was abbot does not appear; but the age of the outside covering of the Dona is fixed to the 14th century.

"Since the foregoing was written I have seen the Dona, which was exhibited at the last meeting of the Royal Irish Academy. It has been put together at a guess, but different from the drawing. There is inside O'Barrdan's case, another of silver plates some centuries older, and inside that the yew box, which originally contained the manuscripts, now so united by damp as to be apparently inseparable, and nearly illegible; for they have lost the colour of vellum, and are quite black, and very much decayed. The old Irish version of the New Testament is well worthy of being edited; it is, I conceive, the oldest Latin version extant, and varies much from the Vulgate or Jerome's.

* *All* the successors of the founder saints were called by the Irish, *comorbs*, or *corbs*. The reader will perceive that O'Carbry was a distant but *not* the *immediate*, successor of St. Tigernach.

"The MS. inclosed in the yew box appears from the two membranes handed me by your friend Mr. —, to be a copy of the Gospels—at least those membranes were part of the two first membranes of the Gospel of St. Matthew, and, I would say, written in the 5th or 6th century; were, probably, the property of St. Tigernach himself, and passed most likely to the abbots of Clounish, his successors, as an heir-loom, until it fell into the hands of the Maguires, the most powerful of the princes of the country now comprising the diocese of Clogher. Dr. O'Beirne's letter I trust you will publish. I feel much indebted to that gentleman for his courteous expressions towards me, and shall be most happy to have the pleasure of being personally known to him.

"You must make allowance for the hasty sketch which is here given. The advanced state of your printing would not allow me time for a more elaborate investigation.

"Believe me, my dear Sir,

"Very sincerely yours,

"W. BETHAM."

We cannot close the illustrations of this ancient and venerable relic without adding an extract from a most interesting and authentic history of it, contributed by our great Irish antiquarian, George Petrie, Esq., R.H.A., M.R.I.A., to the 18th vol. of the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, together with an engraving of it taken from a drawing made by the same accomplished artist.

"I shall endeavour to arrange these evidences in consecutive order.

"It is of importance to prove that this *cumdach*, or reliquary, has been from time immemorial popularly known by the name of *Domnach*, or, as it is pronounced, Donagh, a word derived from the Latin *Dominicus*. This fact is proved by a recent popular tale of very great power, by Mr. Carleton, called the 'Donagh,' in which the superstitious uses to which this reliquary has been long applied, are ably exhibited, and made subservient to the interests of the story. It is also particularly described under this name by the Rev. John Groves, in his account of the parish of Errigal-Keeroge, in the third volume of Shaw Mason's Parochial Survey, page 163, though, as the writer states, it was not actually preserved in that parish.

"2. The inscriptions on the external case leave no doubt that the *Domnach* belonged to the monastery of Clones, or see of Clogher. The John O'Karbri, the *Comharb*, or successor of St. Tigernach, recorded in one of those inscriptions as the person at whose cost, or by whose permission, the outer ornamental case was made, was, according to the Annals of the Four Masters, Abbot of Clones, and died in the year 1353. He is properly called in that inscription *Comorbanus*, or successor of Tigernach, who was the first Abbot and Bishop of the Church of Clones, to which place, after the death of St. Mac-Carthen in the year 506, he removed the see of Clogher, having erected a new church, which he dedicated to the apostles Peter and Paul. St. Tigernach, according to all our ancient authorities, died in the year 548.

"3. It appears from a fragment of an ancient life of St. Mac-Carthen, preserved by Colgan, that a remarkable reliquary was given by St. Patrick to that saint when he placed him over the see of Clogher.

"'Et addidit, [Patricius] Accipie, inquit, baculum itineris mei, quo ego membra mea sustento et scrinium in quo de sanctorum Apostolorum reliquiis, et de sanctæ Mariæ capillis, et sanctæ Crucis Domini, et sepulchro ejus, et aliis reliquiis sanctis continentur. Quibus dietis dimisit eum oculo pacis paterna fultum benedictione.'—Colgan, *Vit. S. Maccarthani* (24 Mart.) Acta SS. p. 738.

"From this passage we learn one great cause of the sanctity in which this reliquary was held, and of the uses of the several recesses for reliques which it presents. It also explains the historical *relievo* on the top—the figure of St. Patrick presenting the *Domnach* to St. Mac-Carthen.

"4. In Jocelyn's Life of St. Patrick, (cap. 143,) we have also a notice to the same effect, but in which the *Domnach* is called a *Chrimatorium*, and the relics are not specified—in all probability because they were not then appended to it.

"In these authorities there is evidently much appearance of the Monkish frauds of the middle ages; but still they are evidences of the tradition of the country that such a gift had been made by Patrick to Mac-Carthen. And as we advance higher in chronological authorities, we find the notice of this gift stripped of much of its acquired garb of fiction, and related with more of the simplicity of truth.

"5. In the life of St. Patrick called the Tripartite, usually ascribed to St. Evin, an author of the seventh century, and which, even in its present interpolated state, is confessedly prior to the tenth, there is the following remarkable passage (as translated by Colgan from the original Irish) relative to the gift of the *Domnach* from the Apostle of

Ireland to St. Mac-Carthen, in which it is expressly described under the very same appellation which it still bears.

“ Aliquantis ergo evolutis diebus *Mac-Carthennum*, sive *Caerthennum* Episcopum prefecit sedi Episcopali Clocherensi, ab Ardmacha regni Metropoli haud multum distante: et apud eum reliquit argenteum quoddam reliquarium *Domnach-airgidh* vulgò nuncupatum; quod viro Dei, in Hiberniam venienti, colitus missum erat.—VII. *Vita S. Patricii*, Lib. III. cap. 3, *Tr. Th.* p. 149.

“ This passage is elsewhere given by Colgan, with a slight change of words in the translation.

“ In this version, which is unquestionably prior to all the others, we find the *Domnach* distinguished by the appellation of *Airgid*—an addition which was applicable only to its more ancient or *silver* plated case, and which could not with propriety be applied to its more recent covering, which in its original state had the appearance of being of gold.

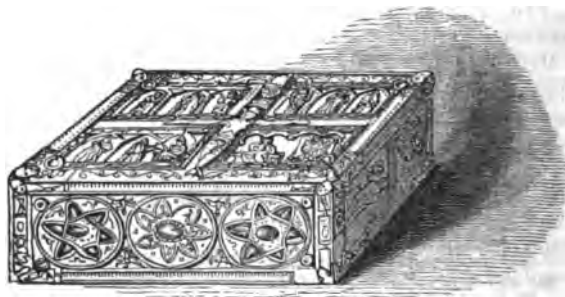
“ On these evidences—and more might probably be procured if time had allowed—we may, I think, with tolerable certainty, rest the following conclusions:

“ 1. That the *Domnach* is the identical reliquary given by St. Patrick to St. Mac-Carthen.

“ 2. As the form of the *cumdach* indicates that it was intended to receive a book, and as the relics are all attached to the outer and least ancient cover, it is manifest that the use of the box as a reliquary was not its original intention. The natural inference therefore is, that it contained a manuscript which had belonged to St. Patrick; and as a manuscript copy of the Gospels, apparently of that early age, is found within it, there is every reason to believe it to be that identical one for which the box was originally made, and which the Irish apostle probably brought with him on his mission into this country. It is indeed, not merely possible, but even probable, that the existence of this manuscript was unknown to the Monkish biographers of St. Patrick and St. Mac-Carthen, who speak of the box as a *scrinium* or reliquary only. The outer cover was evidently not made to open; and some, at least, of the relics attached to it were not introduced into Ireland before the twelfth century. It will be remembered also that no superstition was and is more common in connexion with the ancient *cumdachs* than the dread of their being opened.

“ These conclusions will, I think, be strengthened considerably by the facts, that the word *Domnach*, as applied either to a church, as usual, or to a reliquary, as in this instance, is only to be found in our histories in connexion with St. Patrick's time; and, that in the latter sense—its application to a reliquary—it only once occurs in all our ancient authorities, namely, in the single reference to the gift to St. Mac-Carthen; no other reliquary in Ireland, as far as can be ascertained, having ever been known by that appellation. And it should also be observed, that all the ancient reliques preserved in Ireland, whether bells, books, croziers, or other remains, have invariably, and without any single exception, been preserved and venerated only as appertaining to the original founders of the churches to which they belonged.”

There is very little to be added, except that the Donagh was purchased for a few pounds from the old woman who owned it, by Mr. George Smith, of the house of Hodges and Smith, of College Green, Dublin, who very soon sold it for a large sum to the Honourable Mr. Westons, in whose possession I presume it now is.





PHIL PURCEL was a singular character, for he was never married; but notwithstanding his singularity, no man ever possessed, for practical purposes, a more plentiful stock of duplicity. All his acquaintances knew that Phil was a knave of the first water, yet was he decidedly a general favourite. Now as we hate mystery ourselves, we shall reveal the secret of this remarkable popularity; though, after all, it can scarcely be called so, for Phil was not the first cheat who has been popular in his day. The cause of his success lay simply in this;—that he never laughed; and none of our readers need be told, that the appearance of a grave cheat in Ireland is an originality which almost runs up into a miracle. This gravity induced every one to look upon him as a phenomenon. The assumed simplicity of his manners was astonishing, and the ignorance which he feigned, so apparently natural, that it was scarcely possible for the most keen-sighted searcher into human motives to detect him. The only way of understanding the man was to deal with him: if, after *that*, you did not comprehend him thoroughly, the fault was not Phil's, but your own. Although not mirthful himself, he was the cause of mirth in others; for, without ever smiling at his own gains, he contrived to make others laugh at their losses. His disposition, setting aside laughter, was strictly anomalous. The most incompatible, the most

unamalgamatable, and the most uncomeatable qualities that ever refused to unite in the same individual, had no scruple at all to unite in Phil. But we hate metaphysics, which we leave to the mechanical philosophers, and proceed to state that Phil was a miser, which is the best explanation we can give of his gravity.

Ireland, owing to the march of intellect, and the superiority of modern refinement, has been for some years past, and is at present, well supplied with an abundant variety of professional men, every one of whom will undertake, for proper considerations, to teach us, Irish, all manner of useful accomplishments. The drawing-master talks of his profession; the dancing-master of *his* profession; the fiddler, tooth-drawer, and corn-cutter, (who, by the way, *reaps* a richer harvest than we do,) since the devil has tempted the schoolmaster to go abroad, are all practising in his absence, as professional men.

Now Phil must be included among this class of grandiloquent gentlemen, for he entered life as a Professor of Pig-driving; and it is but justice towards him to assert, that no corn-cutter of them all ever elevated his profession so high as Phil did that in which he practised. In fact, he raised it to the most exalted pitch of improvement of which it was then susceptible; or to use the cant of the day, he soon arrived at "the head of his profession."

In Phil's time, however, pig-driving was not so general, nor had it made such rapid advances as in modern times. It was, then, simply pig-driving, unaccompanied by the improvements of poverty, sickness, and famine. Political economy had not then taught the people how to be poor upon the most scientific principles; free trade had not shown the nation the most approved plan of reducing itself to the lowest possible state of distress; nor liberalism enabled the working classes to scoff at religion, and wisely to stop at the very line that lies between outrage and rebellion. Many errors and inconveniences, now happily exploded, were then in existence. The people, it is true, were somewhat attached to their landlords, but still they were burdened with the unnecessary appendages of good coats and stout shoes; were tolerably industrious, and had the mortification of being able to pay their rents, and feed in comfort. They were not, as they are now, free from new coats and old prejudices, nor improved by the intellectual march of politics and poverty. When either a man or a nation starves, it is a luxury to starve in an enlightened manner; and nothing is more consolatory to a person acquainted with public rights and constitutional privileges, than to understand those liberal principles upon which he fasts and goes naked.

From all we have said, the reader sees clearly that pig-driving did not then proceed upon so extensive a scale as it does at present. The people, in fact, killed many of them for their own use; and we know not how it happened, but political ignorance and good bacon kept them in more flesh and comfort than those theories which have since succeeded so well in introducing the science of starvation as the basis of national prosperity. Irishmen are frequently taxed with extravagance, in addition to their other taxes; but we should be glad to know what people in Europe reduce economy in the articles of food and clothing to such close practice as they do.

Be this as it may, there was, in Ireland, an old breed of swine, which is now nearly extinct, except in some remote parts of the country, where they are still useful in the hunting season, particularly if dogs happen to be scarce.* They were a tall, loose species, with legs of an unusual length, with no flesh, short ears, as if they had been cropped for sedition, and with long faces of a highly intellectual cast. They were also of such activity that few greyhounds could clear a ditch or cross a field with more agility or speed. Their backs formed a rainbow arch, capable of being contracted or extended to an inconceivable degree; and their usual rate of travelling in droves was at mail-coach speed, or eight Irish miles an hour, preceded by an outrider to clear the way, whilst their rear was brought up by another horseman, going at a three-quarter gallop.

In the middle of summer, when all nature reposed under the united influence of heat and dust, it was an interesting sight to witness a drove of them sweeping past, like a whirlwind, in a cloud of their own raising; their sharp and lengthy outlines dimly visible through the shining haze, like a flock of antelopes crossing the deserts of the East.

But alas! for those happy days! This breed is now a curiosity—few specimens of it remaining except in the mountainous parts of the country, whither these lovers of liberty, like the free natives of the back settlements of America, have retired to avoid the encroachments of civilization, and exhibit their Irish antipathy to the slavish comforts of steam-boat navigation, and the relaxing luxuries of English feeding.

Indeed, their patriotism, as evinced in an attachment to Ireland and Irish habits, was scarcely more remarkable than their sagacity. There is not an antiquary among the members of that learned and useful body, the Irish Academy, who can boast such an intimate knowledge of the Irish language in all its shades of meaning and idiomatic beauty, as did this once flourishing class of animals. Nor were they confined to the Irish tongue alone, many of them understood English too; and it was said of those that belonged to a convent, the members of which, in their intercourse with each other, spoke only in Latin, that they were tolerable masters of that language, and refused to leave a potato field or plot of cabbages, except when addressed in it. To the English tongue, however, they had a deep-rooted antipathy; whether it proceeded from the national feeling, or the fact of its not being sufficiently guttural, I cannot say: but be this as it may, it must be admitted that they were excellent Irish scholars, and paid a surprising degree of deference and obedience to whatever was addressed to them in their own language. In Munster, too, such of them as belonged to the hedge-schoolmasters were good proficientes in Latin; but it is on a critical knowledge of their native tongue that I take my stand. On this point they were unrivalled by the most learned pigs or antiquaries of their day; none of either class possessing, at that period, such a knowledge of Irish manners, nor so keen a sagacity in tracing out Irish *roots*.

Their education, it is true, was not neglected, and their instructors had the satisfaction of seeing that it was not lost. Nothing could present a

* We assure John Bull, on the authority of Phil Purcel himself, that this is a fact.

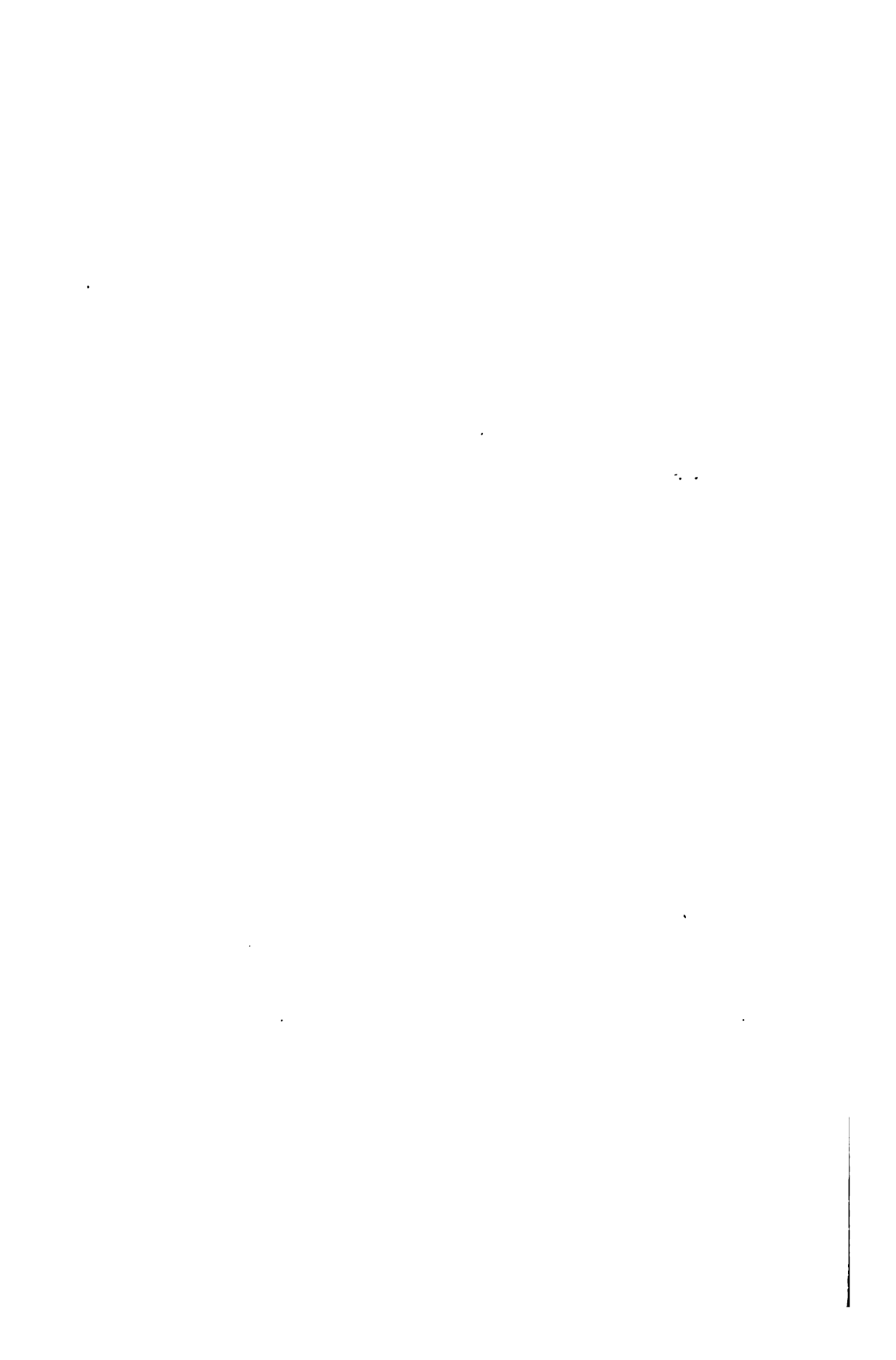
finer display of true friendship founded upon a sense of equality, mutual interest, and good-will, than the Irishman and his pig. The Arabian and his horse are proverbial ; but had our English neighbours known as much of Ireland as they did of Arabia, they would have found as signal instances of attachment subsisting between the former as between the latter ; and, perhaps, when the superior comforts of an Arabian hut are contrasted with the squalid poverty of an Irish cabin, they would have perceived a heroism and a disinterestedness evinced by the Irish parties, that would have struck them with greater admiration.

The pigs, however, of the present day are a fat, gross, and degenerate breed ; and more like well-fed aldermen, than Irish pigs of the old school. They are, in fact, a proud, lazy, carnal race, entirely of the earth, earthy. John Bull assures us it is one comfort, however, that we do not eat, but ship them out of the country ; yet, after all, with great respect to John, it is not surprising that we should repine a little on thinking of the good old times of sixty years since, when every Irishman could kill his own pig, and eat it when he pleased. We question much whether any measure that might make the eating of meat compulsory upon us, would experience from Irishmen a *very* decided opposition. But it is very condescending in John to eat our beef and mutton ; and as he happens to want both, it is particularly disinterested in him to encourage us in the practice of self-denial. It is possible, however, that we may ultimately refuse to banquet by proxy on our own provisions ; and that John may not be much longer troubled to eat for us in that capacity.

The education of an Irish pig, at the time of which we write, was an important consideration to an Irishman. He, and his family, and his pig, like the Arabian and his horse, all slept in the same bed ; the pig generally, for the sake of convenience, next the "stock *." At meals the pig usually was stationed at the *scrahag*, or potato-basket ; where the only instances of bad temper he ever displayed broke out in petty and unbecoming squabbles with the younger branches of the family. Indeed, if he ever descended from his high station as a member of the domestic circle, it was upon these occasions, when, with a want of dignity, accounted for only by the grovelling motive of self-interest, he embroiled himself in a series of miserable feuds and contentions about scraping the pot, or carrying off from the jealous urchins about him more than came to his share. In these heart-burnings about the good things of this world, he was treated with uncommon forbearance : in his owner he always had a friend, from whom, when he grunted out his appeal to him he was certain of receiving redress : "Barney, behave, avick : lay down the potstick, an' don't be hatin' the pig, the crathur."

In fact, the pig was never mentioned but with this endearing epithet of "crathur" annexed. "Barney, go an' call home the pig, the crathur, to his dinner, before it gets cowld an him." "Barney, go an' see if you can see the pig, the crathur, his buckwhist will soon be ready." "Barney, run an' dhrive the pig, the crathur, out of Larry Neil's phatie-field : an', Barney, whisper, a bouchal bawn, don't run *too* hard, Barney, for fraid

* That is, at the outside.





you'd lose your breath. What if the crathur *does* get a taste o' the new phatics—small blame to him for the same!"

In short, whatever might have been the habits of the family, such were those of the pig. The latter was usually out early in the morning to take exercise, and the unerring regularity with which he returned at meal-time, gave sufficient proof that procuring an appetite was a work of supererogation on his part. If he came before the meal was prepared, his station was at the door, which they usually shut to keep him out of the way until it should be ready. In the meantime, so far as a forenoon serenade and an indifferent voice could go, his powers of melody were freely exercised on the outside. But he did not stop here: every stretch of ingenuity was tried by which a possibility of gaining admittance could be established. The hat and rags were repeatedly driven in from the windows, which from practice and habit he was enabled to approach on his hind legs; a cavity was also worn by the frequent grubblings of his snout under the door, the lower part of which was broken away by the sheer strength of his tusks, so that he was enabled, by thrusting himself between the bottom of it and the ground, to make a most unexpected appearance on the hearth, before his presence was at all convenient or acceptable.

But, independently of these two modes of entrance, *i. e.* the door and window, there was also a third, by which he sometimes scrupled not to make a descent upon the family. This was by the chimney. There are many of the Irish cabins built for economy's sake against slopes in the ground, so that the labour of erecting either a gable or side-wall is saved by the perpendicular bank that remains after the site of the house is scooped away. Of the facilities presented by this peculiar structure, the pig never failed to avail himself. He immediately mounted the roof (through which, however, he sometimes took an unexpected flight), and traversing it with caution, reached the chimney, into which he deliberately *backed* himself, and, with no small share of courage, went down precisely as the northern bears are said to descend the trunks of trees during the winter, but with far different motives.

In this manner he cautiously retrograded downwards with a hardihood which set furze bushes, brooms, tongs, and all other available weapons of the cabin at defiance. We are bound, however, to declare, that this mode of entrance, which was only resorted to when every other failed, was usually received by the cottager and his family with a degree of mirth and good-humour that were not lost upon the sagacity of the pig. In order to save him from being scorched, which he deserved for his temerity, they usually received him in a creel, often in a quilt, and sometimes in the tattered blanket, or large pot, out of which he looked with a humourous conception of his own enterprise, that was highly diverting. We must admit, however, that he was sometimes received with the comforts of a hot poker, which Paddy pleasantly called, "givin' him a *scarra* welcome."

Another trait in the character of these animals, was the utter scorn with which they treated all attempts to fatten them. In fact, the usual consequences of good feeding were almost inverted in their case; and although I might assert that they became leaner in proportion to what

they received, yet I must confine myself to truth, by stating candidly that this was not the fact; that there was a certain state of fleshlessness to which they arrived, but from which they neither advanced nor receded by good feeding or bad.

At this point, despite of all human ingenuity, they remained stationary for life, received the bounty afforded them with a greatness of appetite resembling the fortitude of a brave man, which rises in energy according to the magnitude of that which it has to encounter. The truth is, they were scandalous hypocrites; for with the most prodigious capacity for food, they were spare as philosophers, and fitted evidently more for the chase than the sty; rather to run down a buck or a hare for the larder, than to have a place in it themselves. If you starved them, they defied you to diminish their flesh; and if you stuffed them like aldermen, they took all they got, but disdained to carry a single ounce more than if you gave them whey thickened with water. In short, they gloried in maceration and liberty; were good Irish scholars, someti . acquainted with Latin; and their flesh, after the trouble of separating it from a superfluity of tough skin, was excellent *conison* so far as it went.

Now Phil Purcel, whom we will introduce more intimately to the reader by and by, was the son of a man who always kept a pig. His father's house had a small loft, to which the ascent was by a step-ladder through a door in the inside gable. The first good thing ever Phil was noticed for he said upon the following occasion. His father happened to be called upon, one morning before breakfast, by his landlord, who it seems occasionally visited his tenantry to encourage, direct, stimulate, or reprove them, as the case might require. Phil was a boy then, and sat on the hob in the corner, eyeing the landlord and his father during their conversation. In the mean time the pig came in, and deliberately began to ascend the ladder with an air of authority that marked him as one in the exercise of an established right. The landlord was astonished at seeing the animal enter the best room in the house, and could not help expressing his surprise to old Purcel:

"Why, Purcel, is your pig in the habit of treating himself to the comforts of your best room?"

"The pig is it, the crathur? Why, your haner," said Purcel, after a little hesitation, "it sometimes goes up of a mornin' to waken the childre, particularly when the buckwhist happens to be late. It doesn't like to be waitin'; and sure none of us likes to be kept from the male's mate, your haner, when we want it, no more than it, the crathur!"

"But I wonder your wife permits so filthy an animal to have access to her rooms in this manner."

"Filthy!" replied Mrs. Purcel, who felt herself called upon to defend the character of the pig, as well as her own, "why, one would think, Sir, that any crathur that's among Christyen childre, like one o' themselves, couldn't be filthy. I could take it to my dying' day, that there's not a claner or dacenter pig in the kingdom, than the same pig. It never misbehaves, the crathur, but goes out, as wise an' riglar, jist by a look, an' that's enough for it, any day—a single look, your haner, the poor crathur!"

"I think," observed Phil, from the hob, "that nobody has a betterer

right to the run of the house, whether up stairs or down stairs, *than him that pays the rent.*"

"Well said, my lad!" observed the landlord, laughing at the quaint ingenuity of Phil's defence. "His payment of the rent is the best defence possible, and no doubt should cover a multitude of his errors."

"A multitude of his shins you mane, Sir," said Phil, "for thrath he's all shin."

In fact, Phil from his infancy had an uncommon attachment to these animals, and by a mind naturally shrewd and observing, made himself as intimately acquainted with their habits and instincts, and the best modes of managing them, as ever the celebrated *Cahir na Cappul** did with those of the horse. Before he was fifteen, he could drive the most vicious and obstinate pig as quietly before him as a lamb; yet no one knew how, nor by what means he had gained the secret that enabled him to do it. Whenever he attended a fair, his time was principally spent among the pigs, where he stood handling, and examining, and pretending to buy them, although he seldom had half-a crown in his pocket. At length, by boarding up such small sums as he could possibly lay his hand on, he got

* I subjoin from Townsend's Survey of the County of Cork a short but authentic account of this most extraordinary character — "James Sullivan was a native of the county of Cork, and an awkward ignorant rustic of the lowest class, generally known by the appellation of the *Whisperer*, and his profession was horse-breaking. The credulity of the vulgar bestowed that epithet upon him, from an opinion that he communicated his wishes to the animal by means of a whisper; and the singularity of his method gave some colour to the superstitious belief. As far as the sphere of his control extended, the boast of *Veni, Vidi, Vici*, was more justly claimed by James Sullivan, than by Cæsar, or even Bonaparte himself. How his art was acquired, or in what it consisted, is likely to remain for ever unknown, as he has lately left the world without divulging it. His son, who follows the same occupation, possesses but a small portion of the art, having either never learned its true secret, or being incapable of putting it in practice. The wonder of his skill consisted in the short time requisite to accomplish his design, which was performed in private, and without any apparent means of coercion. Every description of horse, or even mule, whether previously broke, or unhandled, whatever their peculiar vices or ill habits might have been, submitted, without show of resistance, to the magical influence of his art, and, in the short space of half an hour, became gentle and tractable. The effect, though instantaneously produced, was generally durable. Though more submissive to him than to others, yet they seemed to have acquired a docility unknown before. When sent for to tame a vicious horse, he directed the stable in which he and the object of his experiment were placed, to be shut, with orders not to open the door until a signal given. After a *lêta-à-lêta* between him and the horse for about half an hour, during which little or no bustle was heard, the signal was made; and upon opening the door, the horse was seen lying down, and the man by his side, playing familiarly with him, like a child with a puppy dog. From that time he was found perfectly willing to submit to discipline, however repugnant to his nature before. Some saw his skill tried on a horse, which could never be brought to stand for a smith to shoe him. The day after Sullivan's half-hour lecture, I went, not without some incredulity, to the smith's shop, with many other curious spectators, where we were eye-witnesses of the complete success of his art. This, too, had been a troop-horse; and it was supposed, not without reason, that after regimental discipline had failed, no other would be found availing. I observed that the animal seemed afraid, whenever Sullivan either spoke or looked at him. How that extraordinary ascendancy could have been obtained, it is difficult to conjecture. In common cases, this mysterious preparation was unnecessary. He seemed to possess an instinctive power of inspiring awe, the result, perhaps, of natural intrepidity, in which, I believe, a great part of his art consisted; though the circumstance of the *lêta-à-lêta* shows, that, upon particular occasions, something more must have been added to it. A faculty like this would, in other hands, have made a fortune, and great offers have been made to him for the exercise of his art abroad; but hunting, and attachment to his native soil, were his ruling passions. He lived at home, in the style most agreeable to his disposition, and nothing could induce him to quit Dunhallow and the fox-hounds."

together the price of a "slip," which he bought, reared, and educated in a manner that did his ingenuity great credit. When this was brought to its *no plus ultra* of fatness, he sold it, and purchased two more, which he fed in the same way. On disposing of these, he made a fresh purchase, and thus proceeded, until, in the course of a few years, he was a well-known pig-jobber.

Phil's journeys as a pig-driver to the leading sea-port towns nearest him, were always particularly profitable. In Ireland swine are not kept in sties, as they are among English feeders, but permitted to go at liberty through pasture fields, commons, and along roadsides, where they make up as well as they can for the scanty pittance allowed them at home during meal-times. We do not, however, impeach Phil's honesty; but simply content ourselves with saying, that when his journey was accomplished, he mostly found the original number with which he had set out increased by three or four, and sometimes by half-a-dozen. Pigs in general resemble each other, and it surely was not Phil's fault if a stray one, feeding on the roadside or common, thought proper to join his drove and see the world. Phil's object, we presume, was only to take care that his original number was not diminished, its increase being a matter in which he felt little concern.

He now determined to take a professional trip to England, and that this might be the more productive, he resolved to purchase a lot of the animals we have been describing. No time was lost in this speculation. The pigs were bought up as cheaply as possible, and Phil set out, for the first time in his life, to try with what success he could measure his skill against that of a Yorkshireman. On this occasion, he brought with him a pet, which he had with considerable pains trained up for purposes hereafter to be explained.

There was nothing remarkable in the passage, unless that every creature on board was sea-sick, except the pigs; even to them, however, the change was a disagreeable one; for to be pent up in the hold of a ship was a deprivation of liberty, which, fresh as they were from their native hills, they could not relish. They felt, therefore, as patriots, a loss of freedom, but not a whit of appetite; for, in truth, of the latter no possible vicissitude short of death could deprive them.

Phil, however, with an assumed air of simplicity absolutely stupid, disposed of them to a Yorkshire dealer, at about twice the value they would have brought in Ireland, though as pigs went in England it was low enough. He declared that they had been fed on *tip-top* feeding; which was literally true, as he afterwards admitted that the tops of nettles and potato stalks constituted the only nourishment they had got for three weeks before.

The Yorkshireman looked with great contempt upon what he considered a miserable essay to take him in.

"What a fule this H Irishmun mun bea;" said he, "to think to teake me in! Had he said that them there H Irish swoine were *badly feade*, I'd ha' thought it fairish enough on un; but to seay that they was oll weal feade on *tip-top* fecadin'! Nea, nea! I knaws weal enough that they was noat feade on nothin' at oll, which meakes them loak so poorish! Howsomever, I shall fatten them. I'se warrant—I'se warrant I shall!"

When driven home to sties somewhat more comfortable than the cabins of unfortunate Irishmen, they were well supplied with food which would have been very often considered a luxury by poor Paddy himself, much less by his pigs.

"Measter," said the man who had seen them fed, "them there Hirish pigs ha' not teasted nout for a moonth yet: they feade like nout I never seed o' my laife!!"

"Ay! ay!" replied the master, "I'se warrant they'll soon fatten—I'se warrant they shall, Hodge—they be praimse feeders—I'se warrant they shall; and then, Hodge, we've bit the soft Hirishmun."

Hodge gave a knowing look at his master, and grinned at this observation.

The next morning Hodge repaired to the sties to see how they were thriving; when, to his great consternation, he found the feeding-troughs clean as if they had been washed, and not a single Irish pig to be seen or heard about the premises; but to what retreat the animals could have betaken themselves, was completely beyond his comprehension. He scratched his head, and looked about him in much perplexity:

"Dang un!" he exclaimed, "I never seed nout like this."

He would have proceeded in a strain of cogitation equally enlightened, had not a noise of shouting, alarm, and confusion in the neighbourhood, excited his attention. He looked about him, and to his utter astonishment saw that some extraordinary commotion prevailed, that the country was up, and the hills alive with people, who ran, and shouted, and wheeled at full flight in all possible directions. His first object was to join the crowd, which he did as soon as possible, and found that the pigs he had shut up the preceding night in sties whose enclosures were at least four feet high, had cleared them like so many *chamois*, and were now closely pursued by the neighbours, who rose *en masse* to hunt down and secure such dreadful depredators.

The waste and mischief they had committed in one night were absolutely astonishing. Bean and turnip fields, and vegetable enclosures of all descriptions, kitchen-gardens, corn-fields, and even flower-gardens, were rooted up and destroyed with an appearance of system which would have done credit to Terry Alt himself.

Their speed was the theme of every tongue. Hedges were taken in their flight, and cleared in a style that occasioned the country people to turn up their eyes, and scratch their heads in wonder. Dogs of all degrees bit the dust, and were caught up dead in stupid amazement by their owners, who began to doubt whether or not these extraordinary animals were swine at all. The depredators in the mean time had adopted the Horatian style of battle. Whenever there was an ungenerous advantage taken in the pursuit, by slipping dogs across or before their path, they shot off at a tangent through the next crowd, many of whom they prostrated in their flight; by this means they escaped the dogs until the latter were somewhat exhausted, when, on finding one in advance of the rest, they turned, and, with standing bristles and burning tusks, fatally checked their pursuer in his full career. To wheel and fly until another got in advance, was then the plan of fight; but, in fact, the conflict was

conducted on the part of the Irish pigs with a fertility of expediency that did credit to their country, and established for those who displayed it, the possession of intellect far superior to that of their opponents. The pigs now began to direct their course towards the sties in which they had been so well fed the night before. This being their last flight, they radiated towards one common centre, with a fierceness and celerity that occasioned the women and children to take shelter within-doors. On arriving at the sties, the ease with which they shot themselves over the four-feet walls was incredible. The farmer had caught the alarm, and just came out in time to witness their return; he stood with his hands driven down into the pockets of his red, capacious waistcoat, and uttered not a word. When the last of them came bounding into the sty, Hodge approached, quite breathless and exhausted:

"Oh, measter," he exclaimed, "these be not Hirish pigs at oll, they be Hirish deevils; and yau mun ha' bought 'em fra a cunning mon!"

"Hodge," replied his master, "I'ee be bit—I'ee heard feather talk about un. That breed's *trus* Hirish; but I'ee try and sell 'em to Squire Jolly to hunt wi' as beagles, for he wants a pack. They do say all the swoine that the deevils were put into ha' been drawned; but for my peart, I'ee sure that some on un must ha' escaped to Hireland."

Phil, during the commotion excited by his knavery in Yorkshire, was traversing the country, in order to dispose of his remaining pig; and the manner in which he effected his first sale of it was as follows:—

A gentleman was one evening standing with some labourers by the wayside when a tattered Irishman, equipped in a pair of white dusty brogues, stockings without feet, old patched breeches, a bag slung across his shoulder, his coarse shirt lying open about a neck tanned by the sun into a reddish yellow, a hat nearly the colour of the shoes, and a hay rope tied for comfort about his waist: in one hand he also held a straw rope, that depended from the hind leg of a pig which he drove before him; in the other was a cudgel, by the assistance of which he contrived to limp on after it, his two shoulder-blades rising and falling alternately with a shrugging motion that indicated great fatigue.

When he came opposite where the gentleman stood he checked the pig, which instinctively commenced feeding upon the grass by the edge of the road.

"Och," said he, wiping his brow with the cuff of his coat, "*maerone orth a muck*,"* but I'm kilt wit you. Musha, Gad bless yer haner, an' maybe ye'd buy a slip of a pig fwhrom me, that has my heart bruck, so she has, if ever any body's heart was bruck wit the likes of her; an' sure so there was, no doubt, or I wouldn't be as I am wit her. I'll give her a dead bargain, Sir; for it's only to get her aff av my hands I'm wantin', plase yer haner—*husth amuck—husth, a veehones!* † Be asy, an' me in conversation wit his haner here!"

"You are an Irishman?" the gentleman inquired.

"I am, Sir, from Cannought, yer haner, an' 'ill sell the crathur dag cheap, all out. Asy, you thief!"

"I don't want the pig, my good fellow," replied the Englishman,

* My sorrow on you for a pig.

† Silence, pig! Silence, you vagabond!

without evincing curiosity enough to inquire how he came to have such a commodity for sale.

"She'd be the darlint in no time wit you, Sir; the run o' your kitchen 'ud make her up a beauty, your haner, along wit no throuble to the sarwints about sweepin' it, or any thing. You'd only have to lay down the potato-basket on the flure, or the misthress, Gad bless her, could do it, an' not lave a crumblin' behind her, besides sleepin, your haner, in the carner beyant, if she'd take the throuble."

The sluggish phlegm of the Englishman was stirred up a little by the twisted, and somewhat incomprehensible nature of these instructions.

"How far do you intend to proceed to-night, Paddy?" said he.

"The sarra one o' myself knows, plaze yer haner: sure we've an ould sayin' of our own in Ireland beyant—that he's a wise man can tell how far he'll go, Sir, till he come to his journey's ind. I'll give this crathur to you at *more* nor her value, yer haner."

"More!—why the man knows not what he's saying," observed the gentleman; "*less* you mean, I suppose, Paddy?"

"More or less, Sir: you'll get her a bargain; an' Gad bless you, Sir!"

"But it is a commodity which I don't want at present. I am very well stocked with pigs, as it is. Try elsewhere."

"She'd flog the counthry side, Sir; an' if the mishthress herself, Sir, 'ud shake the wishp o' sthraw fwor her in the kitchen, Sir, near the whoire. Yer haner could spake to her about it; an' in no time put a knife in her whin you plazed. In regard o' the other thing, Sir—she's like a Christyeen, yer haner, an' no throuble, Sir, if you'd be seein' company or any thing."

"It's an extraordinary pig, this, of yours."

"It's no lie fwor you, Sir; she's as clane an' dacent a crathur, Sir! Och, if the same pig 'ud come into the care o' the misthress, Gad bliss her! an' I'm sure if she has as much gudness in her face as the hanerable *dinnha ousahl**—the handsome gintleman she's married upon!—you'll have her thrivin' bravely, Sir, shartly, plase Gad, if you'll take courage. Will I dhrive her up the aveny fwor you, Sir? A good gintlewoman I'm sure, is the same mishtriss! Will I dhrive her up fwor you, Sir? *Shadh amuck—shadh dherim!*"†

"No, no; I have no further time to lose; you may go forward."

"Thank yer haner: is it whorid toarst the house abow, Sir? I wouldn't be standin' up, Sir, wit you about a thrifle; an' you'll have her, Sir, fwor any thing you plaze beyant a pound, yer haner; an' 'tis throwin' her away it is: but one can't be hard wit a rale gintleman, any way."

"You only annoy me, man; besides I don't want the pig; you lose time; I don't want to buy it, I repeat to you."

"Gad bliss you, Sir—Gad bliss you! Maybe if I'd make up to the mishthress, yer haner! Thrath she wouldn't turn the crathur from the place, in regard that the tindherness ow the feelin' would come ower her—the rale gintlewoman, any way! 'Tis dag chape you have her at what I said, Sir; an' Gad bliss you!"

* Gentleman.

† Behave yourself, pig—behave, I say.

"Do you want to compel me to purchase it whether I will or no?"

"Thrath, it's whor next to nothin' I'm givin' her to you, Sir; but sure you can make your own price at any thing beyant a pound. *Hurrih anuck—stadh anish!*—be asy, you crathur, sure you're gettin' into good quarters, any how—goin' to the hanerable English gentleman's kitchen; an' Gad knows it's a pleasure to dale wit 'em. Och, the world's differ there is betuxt thim an' our own dirty Irish buckeens, that 'ud shkin a bad skilleen, an' pay their debts wit the remaindher. The gateman 'ud let me in, yer haner, an' I'll meet you at the big house abow."

"Upon my honour this is a good jest," said the gentleman, absolutely teased into compliance; "you are forcing me to buy that which I don't want."

"Sure you will, Sir; you'll want more nor that yit, please Gad, if you be spared. Come, amuck—come, you crathur; faix, you're in luck so you are—gettin' so good a place wit his haner here, that you won't know yourself shortly, plase Gad."

He immediately commenced driving his pig towards the gentleman's residence with such an air of utter simplicity, as would have imposed upon any man not guided by direct inspiration. Whilst he approached the house, its proprietor arrived there by another path a few minutes before him, and, addressing his lady, said,

"My dear, will you come and look at a purchase which an Irishman has absolutely compelled me to make. You had better come and see himself too, for he is the greatest simpleton of an Irishman I have ever met with."

The lady's curiosity was more easily excited than that of her husband. She not only came out, but brought with her some ladies who had been on a visit, in order to hear the Irishman's brogue, and to amuse themselves at his expense. Of the pig, too, it appeared she was determined to know something.

"George, my love, is the pig also from Ireland?"

"I don't know, my dear; but I should think so from its fleshless appearance. I have never seen so spare an animal of that class in this country."

"Juliana," said one of the ladies to her companion, "don't go too near him. Gracious! look at the bludgeon, or beam, or something he carries in his hand, to fight and beat the people, I suppose: yet," she added, putting up her glass, "the man is actually not ill-looking; and, though not so tall as the Irishman in Sheridan's Rivals, he is well made."

"His eyes are good," said her companion—"a bright gray and keen; and were it not that his nose is rather short and turned up, he would be handsome."

"George, my love," exclaimed the lady of the mansion, "he is like most Irishmen of his class that I have seen; indeed, scarcely so intelligent, for he *does* appear quite a simpleton, except, perhaps, a lurking kind of expression, which is a sign of their humour, I suppose. Don't you think so, my love?"

"No, my dear; I think him a bad specimen of the Irishman. Whether it is that he talks our language but imperfectly, or that he is a stupid

creature, I cannot say; but in selling the pig just now, he actually told me that he would let me have it for *more* than it was worth."

"Oh, that was so laughable! We will speak to him, though."

The degree of estimation in which these civilized English held Phil was so low, that this conversation took place within a few yards of him, precisely as if he had been an animal of an inferior species, or one of the aborigines of New Zealand.

"Pray what is your name?" inquired the matron.

"Phadhrumshagh Corfuffle, plase yer haner: my fadher carrid the same name upon him. We're av the Corfuffles av Leatherum Laghy, my lady; but my grandmudher was a Dornyeen, an' my own mudher, plase yer haner, was 'o' the Shudhurthagans o' Ballymadoghy, my ladyship. *Stadh anish, amuck brodagh!**—be asy, can't you, an' me in conversation wit the beauty o' the world that I'm spakin' to."

"That's the Negus language," observed one of the young ladies, who affected to be a wit and a blue-stocking; "it's Irish and English mixed."

"Thrath, an' but that the handsome young lady's so purty," observed Phil, "I'd be sayin' myself that that's a quare remark upon a poor unlearned man; but, Gad bless her, she is so purty what can one say for lookin' an her!"

"The poor man, Adelaide, speaks as well as he can," replied the lady, rather reprovingly: "he is by no means so wild as one would have expected."

"Candidly speaking, much *tamer* than I expected," rejoined the wit. "Indeed, I meant the poor Irishman no offence."

"Where did you get the pig, friend? and how come you to have it for sale so far from home?"

"Fwhy it isn't whor sale, my lady," replied Phil, evading the former question; "the mather here, Gad bless him an' spare him to you, ma'am!—thrath, an' it's his four quarters that knew how to pick out a wife, any how, whor beauty an' all hanerable whormations o' grandheur—so he did; an' well he deserves you, my lady: faix, it's a fine houseful o' thim you'll have, plase Gad—an' fwhy not? whin it's all in the oorse o' Providence, bein' both so handsome;—he gev me a pound note whor her my ladyship, an' his own plisure atherwards; an' I'm now watin' to be ped."

"What kind of a country is Ireland, as I understand you are an Irishman?"

"Thrath, my lady, it's like fwhat maybe you never seen—a fool's purse, ten guineas goin' out whor one that goes in."

"Upon my word that's wit," observed the young blue-stocking.

"What's your opinion of Irishwomen?" the lady continued; "are they handsomer than the English ladies, think you?"

"Murdher, my lady," says Phil, raising his caubeen, and scratching his head in pretended perplexity, with his finger and thumb, "fwhat am I to say to that, ma'am, and all of yez to the fwhore? But the sarra one av me will give it agin the darlins beyant."

* Be quiet, now, you wicked pig.

"But which do you think the more handsome?"

"Thrath I do, my lady; the Irish and English women would flog the world, an' sure it would be a burnin' shame to go to set them agin one another fwhor beauty."

"Whom did you mean by the 'darlins beyant'?" inquired the blue-stocking, attempting to pronounce the words.

"Faix, Miss, who but the crathurs ower the wather, that kills us entirely, so they do."

"I cannot comprehend him," she added to the lady of the mansion.

"Arrah, maybe I'd make bould to take up the manners from you fwhor a while, my lady, plase yer haner?" said Phil, addressing the latter.

"I do not properly understand you," she replied, "speak plainer."

"Throth, that's fwhat they do, yer haner; they never go about the bush wit yez—the gintlemen, ma'am, of our country, fwhin they do be coortin' yez; an' I want to ax, ma'am, if you plase, fwhat you think of *thim*, that is if ever any of them had the luck to come acrass you, my lady?"

"I have not been acquainted with many Irish gentlemen," she replied, "but I hear they are men of a remarkable character."

"Faix, 'tis you may say that," replied Phil; "sowl, my lady, 'tis well for the mather here, plase yer haner, Sir, that none o' them met wit the mistress before you was both marrid, or, wit riverence be it spoken, 'tis the sweet side o' the tongue they'd be layin' upon you, ma'am, an' the rough side to the mather himself, along wit a few scrapes of a pen on a slip o' paper, jist to appoint the time and place, in regard of her ladyship's purty complexion—an' who can deny that, any way? Faix ma'am, they've a way wit them, my counthrymin, that the ladies like well enough to thravel by. Asy, you deludher, an' me in conwersaytion wit the quality."

"I am quite anxious to know how you came by the pig, Paddy," said the wit.

"Arrah, Miss, sure 'tisn't pigs you're thinkin' on, an' us discoorsin' about the gintlemen from Ireland, that you're all so fond ow here; faix, Miss, they're the boys that fwoight for yees, an' 'ud rather be bringing an Englishman to the *sad* fwhor your sakes, nor atin' bread an' butther. Fwhy, now, Miss, if you were beyant wit us, sarra ounce o' gunpowdher we'd have in no time, for love or money."

"Upon my word I should like to see Ireland!" exclaimed the blue-stocking; "but why would the gunpowdher get scarce, pray?"

"Faix, fightin' about you, Miss, an' all of yez, sure; for myself sees no differ at all in your hanerable fwhormations of beauty and grandheur, an' all high-flown admirations."

"But tell us where you got the pig, Paddy?" persisted the wit, struck naturally enough with the circumstance. "How do you come to have an Irish pig so far from home?"

"Fwhy thin, Miss, 'twas to a brodher o' my own I was bringing it, that was livin' down the counlry here, an fwhin I came to fwhere he lived, the sarra one o' me knew the place, in regard o' havin' forgot

the name of it entirely, an' there was I wit the poor crathur an my hands, till his haner here bought it whrom me—Gad bless you, Sir!"

"As I live, there's a fine Irish blunder," observed the wit; "I shall put it in my commonplace-book—it will be so genuine. I declare I'm quite delighted!"

"Well, Paddy," said the gentleman, "here's your money. There's a pound for you, and that's much more than the miserable animal is worth."

"Thrath, Sir, you have the crathur at what we call in Ireland a bargain*. Maybe yer haner 'ud spit upon the money fwhor luck, Sir. It's the way we do, Sir, beyant."

"No, no, Paddy, take it as it is. Good heavens! what barbarous habits these Irish have in all their modes of life, and how far they are removed from anything like civilization!"

"Thank yer haner. Faix, Sir, this'll come so handy for the landlord at home, in regard o' the rint for the bit o' phatie ground, so it will, if I can get home agin widout brakin' it. Arrah, maybe yer haner 'ud give me the price o' my bed, an' a bit to ate, Sir, an' keep me from brakin' in upon this, Sir, Gad bless the money! I'm thinkin' o' the poor wife an' childher, Sir—strivin', so I am, to do fwhor the darlins."

"Poor soul," said the lady, "he is affectionate in the midst of his wretchedness and ignorance."

"Here—here," replied the Englishman, anxious to get rid of him, "there's a shilling, which I give because you appear to be attached to your family."

"Och, och, fwhat can I say, Sir, only that long may you reign ower your family an' the hanerable ladies to the fwhore, Sir. Gad fwhor ever bliss you, Sir, but you're the kind, noble gintleman, an' all belongin' to you, Sir!"

Having received the shilling, he was in the act of departing, when, after turning it deliberately in his hand, shrugging his shoulders two or three times, and scratching his head, with a vacant face he approached the lady.

"Musha, ma'am, an' maybe ye'd have the tindherness in your heart, seein' that the gudness is in yer hanerable face, any way, an' it would save the skillyeen that the mather gev'd for payin' my passage, so it would, jist to bid the steward, my ladyship, to ardhher me a bit to ate in the kitchen below. The hunger, ma'am, is hard upon me, my lady; an' fwhat I'm doin', sure, is in regard o' the wife at home, an' the childher, the crathurs, an' me far fwhrom them, in a sthrange counthry, Gad help me!"

"What a singular being, George! and how beautifully is the economy of domestic affection exemplified, notwithstanding his half-savage state, in the little plans he devises for the benefit of his wife and children!" exclaimed the good lady, quite unconscious that Phil was a bachelor. "Juliana, my love, desire Timmins to give him his dinner. Follow this young lady, good man, and she will order you refreshment."

"Gad's blessin' upon your beauty an' gudness, my lady; an' a man

* Ironically—a take in

might thravel far afore he'd meet the likes o' you for either o' them. Is it the other handsome young lady I'm to folly, ma'am?"

"Yes," replied the young wit, with an arch smile; "come after me."

"Thrath, Miss, an' it's an asy task to do that, any way; wit a heart an' a half I go, acushla; an' I seen the day, Miss, that it's not much of a mate an' dhrink 'ud throuble me, if I jist got lave to be lookin' at you, wit nothin' but yourself to think an. But the wife an' childher, Miss, makes great changes in us entirely."

"Why you are quite gallant, Paddy."

"Trath, I suppose I am now, Miss; but you see, my hanerable young lady, that's our fw hailin' at home: the counlry's poor, an' we can't help it, wheder or not. We're fw horced to it, Miss, whin we come ower here, by you, an' the likes a' you, mavourneen!"

Phil then proceeded to the house, was sent to the kitchen by the young lady, and furnished through the steward with an abundant supply of cold meat, bread and beer, of which he contrived to make a meal that somewhat astonished the servants. Having satisfied his hunger, he deliberately—but with the greatest simplicity of countenance—filled the wallet which he carried slung across his back, with whatever he had left, observing as he did it:—

"Fwhy, thin, 'tis sthrange it is that the same custom is wit us in Ireland beyant that is here; fw hor whinever a thraveller is axed in, he always brings fw hat he doesn't ate along wit him. An sure enough it's the same here amongst yez," added he, packing up the bread and beef as he spoke, "but Gad bliss the custom, any how, fw hor it's a good one!"

When he had secured the provender, and was ready to resume his journey, he began to yawn, and to exhibit the most unequivocal symptoms of fatigue:

"Arrah, Sir," said he to the steward, "you wouldn't have e'er an ould barn that I'd throw myself in fw hor the night? The sarra leg I have to put undher me, now that I've got stiff wit the sittin' so lang;* that, an' a wishp o' sthraw Sir, to sleep an, an' Gad bliss you!"

"Paddy, I cannot say," replied the steward; "but I shall ask my master, and if he orders it, you shall have the comfort of a hard floor and clean straw, Paddy—that you shall."

"Many thanks to you, Sir: it's in your face, in thrath, the same gudness an' ginerosity."

The gentleman, on hearing Phil's request to be permitted a sleeping-place in the barn, was rather surprised at his wretched notion of comfort than at the request itself.

"Certainly, Timmins, let him sleep there," he replied; "give him sacks and straw enough. I dare say he will feel the privilege a luxury, poor devil, after his fatigue. Give him his breakfast in the morning, Timmins. Good heavens," he added, "what a singular people! What an amazing progress civilization must make before these Irish can be brought at all near the commonest standard of humanity!"

* This is pronounced as in the first syllable of "Langlee,"—not like the Scotch "lang."

At this moment Phil, who was determined to back the steward's request, approached them.

"Paddy," said the gentleman, anticipating him, "I have ordered you sacks and straw in the barn, and your breakfast in the morning before you set out."

"Thrath," said Phil, "if there's e'er a sthraw bliesin' goin', depind an it, Sir, you'll get it, fwhor your hanerable ginerosity to the sthranger. But about the 'slip,' Sir—if the mistress herself 'ud shake the wishp o' sthraw fwhor her in the far carner o' the kitchen below, an' see her gettin' her supper, the crathur, before she'd put her to bed, she'd be thrivin' like a salmon, Sir, in less than no time; an' to ardhher the sarwints, Sir, if you please, not to be defraudin' the crathur of the big phaties. Fwhor in regard it cannot spake fwhor itself, Sir, it frets as wise as a Christyean, when it's not honestly thrated."

"Never fear, Paddy; we shall take good care of it."

"Thank you, Sir. But I aften heerd, Sir, that you dunna how to feed pigs in this counthry in ardhher to mix the fwat an' lane, lair (layer) about."

"And how do you manage that in Ireland, Paddy?"

"Fwhy, Sir, I'll tell you how the mistress, Gad bliss her, will manage it fwhor you: Take the crathur, Sir, an' feed it to-morrow till it's as full as a tick—that's fwhor the fwat, Sir; thin let her give it wothin' at all the next day, but keep it black fwastin'—that's fwhor the lane (lean). Let her stick to that, Sir, keepin' it atin' one day an' fastin' another, for six months, thin put a knife in it, an' if you don't have the fwat an' lane, lair about, beautiful all'out, fwhy niver bl'eve Phadrum-ahagh Corfuffle agin. Ay, indeed!"

The Englishman looked keenly at Phil, but could only read in his countenance a thorough and implicit belief in his own recipe for mixing the fat and lean. It is impossible to express his contempt for the sense and intellect of Phil; nothing could surpass it but the contempt which Phil entertained for him.

"Well," said he to the servant, "I have often heard of the barbarous habits of the Irish, but I must say that the incidents of this evening have set my mind at rest upon the subject. Good heavens! when will ever this besotted country rise in the scale of nations! Did ever a human being hear of such a method of feeding swine! I should have thought it incredible had I heard it from any but an Irishman!"

Phil then retired to the kitchen, where his assumed simplicity highly amused the servants, who, after an hour or two's fun with "Paddy," conducted him in a kind of contemptuous procession to the barn, where they left him to his repose.

The next morning he failed to appear at the hour of breakfast, but his non-appearance was attributed to his fatigue, in consequence of which he was supposed to have over-slept himself. On going, however, to call him from the barn, they discovered that he had decamped; and on looking after the "slip," it was found that both had taken French leave of the Englishman. Phil and the pig had actually travelled fifteen miles that

morning, before the hour on which he was missed—Phil going at a dog's trot, and the pig following at such a respectful distance as might not appear to identify them as fellow-travellers. In this manner Phil sold the pig to upwards of two dozen intelligent English gentlemen and farmers, and after winding up his bargains successfully, both arrived in Liverpool, highly delighted by their commercial trip through England.

The passage from Liverpool to Dublin, in Phil's time, was far different from that which steam and British enterprise have since made it. A vessel was ready to sail for the latter place on the very day of Phil's arrival in town; and, as he felt rather anxious to get out of England as soon as he could, he came, after selling his pig in good earnest, to the aforesaid vessel to ascertain if it were possible to get a deck passage. The year had then advanced to the latter part of autumn; so that it was the season when those inconceivable hordes of Irishmen who emigrate periodically for the purpose of lightening John Bull's labour, were in the act of returning to that country in which they find little to welcome them—but domestic affection and misery.

When Phil arrived at the vessel, he found the captain in a state of peculiar difficulty. About twelve or fourteen gentlemen of rank and property, together with a score or upwards of highly respectable persons, but of less consideration, were in equal embarrassment. The fact was, that as no other vessel left Liverpool that day, about five hundred Irishmen, mostly reapers and mowers, had crowded upon deck, each determined to keep his place at all hazards. The captain, whose vessel was small, and none of the stoutest, flatly refused to put to sea with such a number. He told them it was madness to think of it; he could not risk the lives of the other passengers, nor even their own, by sailing with five hundred on the deck of so small a vessel. If the one-half of them would withdraw peaceably, he would carry the other half, which was as much as he could possibly accomplish. They were very willing to grant that what he said was true; but in the mean time, not a man of them would move, and to clear out such a number of fellows, who loved nothing better than fighting, armed, too, with sickles and scythes, was a task beyond either his ability or inclination to execute. He remonstrated with them, entreated, raged, swore, and threatened; but all to no purpose. His threats and entreaties were received with equal good-humour. Giles and jokes were broken on him without number, and as his passion increased, so did their mirth, until nothing could be seen but the captain in vehement gesticulation, the Irishmen huzzaing him so vociferously, that his dauns and curses, uttered against them, could not reach even his own ears.

"Gentlemen," said he to his cabin passengers, "for the love of Heaven, tax your invention to discover some means whereby to get one-half of these men out of the vessel, otherwise it will be impossible that we can sail to-day. I have already proffered to take one-half of them by lot, but they will not hear of it; and how to manage I am sure I don't know."

The matter, however, was beyond their depth; the thing seemed utterly impracticable, and the chances of their putting to sea were becoming fainter and fainter.

"Bl—t their eyes!" he at length exclaimed, "the ragged, hungry devils! If they heard me with decency I could bear their obstinacy better: but no, they must turn me into ridicule, and break their jests, and turn their cursed barbarous grins upon me in my own vessel. I say, boys," he added, proceeding to address them once more—"I say, savages, I have just three observations to make. The first is,"—

"Arrah, Captain, avourneen, hadn't you betther get upon a stool," said a voice, "an' put a text before it. thin divide it dacently into three halves, an' make a sarmon or it."

"Captain, you wor intinded for the church," added another. "You're the moral* of a Methodist preacher, if you wor dressed in black."

"Let him alone," said a third; "he'd be a jinteel man enough in a wilderness, an' 'ud make an illigant dancin'-masher to the bears."

"He's as graceful as a shaved pig on its hind legs, dancin' the 'Balthrum Jig.'"

The captain's face was literally black with passion: he turned away with a curse, which produced another buzza, and swore that he would rather encounter the bay of Biscay in a storm, than have anything to do with such an unmanageable mob.

"Captain," said a little, shrewd-looking Connaught man, "what 'ud you be willin' to give any body, ower an' abow his free passage, that 'ud tell you how to get one half o' them out?"

"I'll give him a crown," replied the captain, "together with grog and rations to the eyes: I'll be hanged if I don't."

"Thin I'll do it fwor you, Sir, if you keep your word wit me."

"Done!" said the captain; "it's a bargain, my good fellow, if you accomplish it; and, what's more, I'll consider you a knowing one."

"I'm a poor Cannaught man, your haner," replied our friend Phil; "but what's to prevent me thryin'? Tell thim," he continued, "that you *must* go; purtind to be for takin them all wit you, Sir. Put Munsther agin Connaught, one half an this side, an' the odher an that, to keep the crathur of a ship steady, your haner; an' fwhin you have thim half an' half, wit a little room betuxt thim, 'now,' says yer haner, 'boys, you're divided into two halves; if one side kicks the other out o' the ship, I'll bring the cunquirors.'"

The captain said not a word in reply to Phil, but immediately ranged the Munster and Connaught men on each side of the deck—a matter which he found little difficulty in accomplishing, for each party, hoping that he intended to take themselves, readily declared their province, and stood together. When they were properly separated, there still remained about forty or fifty persons belonging to neither province; but, at Phil's suggestion, the captain paired them off to each division, man for man, until they were drawn up into two bodies.

"Now," said he, "there you stand: let one half of you drub the other out of the vessel, and the conquerors shall get their passage."

Instant was the struggle that ensued for the sake of securing a passage, and from the anxiety to save a shilling, by getting out of Liverpool

* Model.

on that day. The saving of the shilling is indeed a consideration with Paddy which drives him to the various resources of begging, claiming kindred with his resident countrymen in England, pretended illness, coming to be passed from parish to parish, and all the turnings and shiftings which his reluctance to part with money renders necessary. Another night, therefore, and probably another day, in Liverpool, would have been attended with expense. This argument prevailed with all: with Munster as well as with Connaught, and they fought accordingly.

When the attack first commenced, each party hoped to be able to expel the other without blows. This plan was soon abandoned. In a few minutes the sticks and fists were busy. Throttling, tugging, cuffing, and knocking down—shouting, hallooing, huzzaing, and yelling, gave evident proofs that the captain, in embracing Phil's proposal, had unwittingly applied the match to a mine, whose explosion was likely to be attended with disastrous consequences. As the fight became warm, and the struggle more desperate, the hooks and scythes were resorted to; blood began to flow, and men to fall, disabled and apparently dying. The immense crowd which had now assembled to witness the fight among the Irishmen, could not stand tamely by, and see so many lives likely to be lost, without calling in the civil authorities. A number of constables in a few minutes attended; but these worthy officers of the civil authorities experienced very uncivil treatment from the fists, cudgels, and sickles of *both* parties. In fact, they were obliged to get from among the rioters with all possible celerity, and to suggest to the magistrates the necessity of calling in the military.

In the mean time the battle rose into a furious and bitter struggle for victory. The deck of the vessel was actually slippery with blood, and many were lying in an almost lifeless state. Several were pitched into the hold, and had their legs and arms broken by the fall; some were tossed over the sides of the vessel, and only saved from drowning by the activity of the sailors; and not a few of those who had been knocked down in the beginning of the fray were trampled into insensibility.

The Munster men at length gave way; and their opponents, following up their advantage, succeeded in driving them to a man out of the vessel, just as the military arrived. Fortunately their interference was unnecessary. The ruffianly captain's object was accomplished; and as no lives were lost, nor any injury more serious than broken bones and flesh-wounds sustained, he got the vessel in readiness, and put to sea.

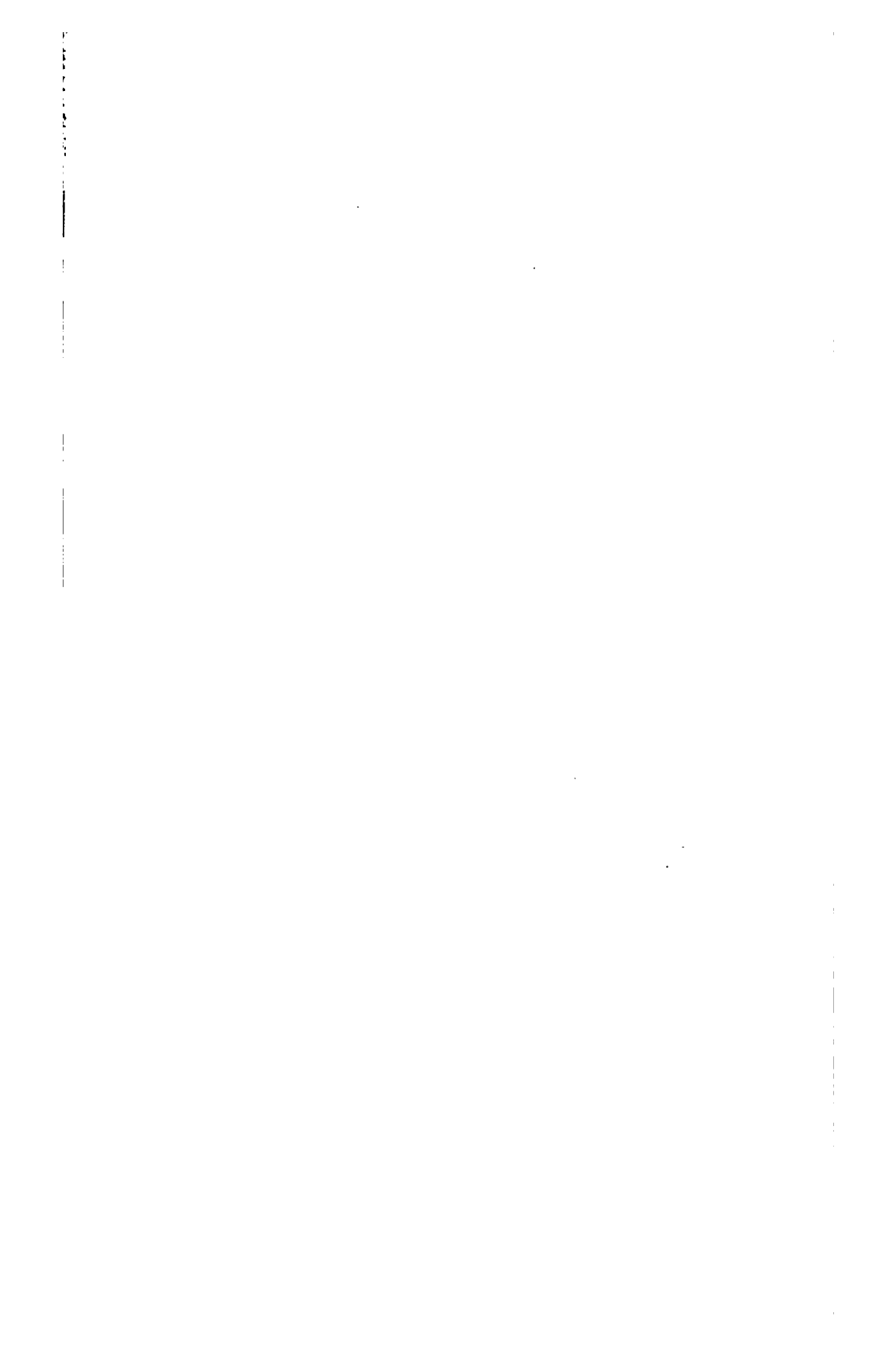
Who would not think that the Irish were a nation of misers, when our readers are informed that all this bloodshed arose from their unwillingness to lose a shilling by remaining in Liverpool another night? Or who could believe that these very men, on reaching home, and meeting their friends in a fair or market, or in a public-house after mass on a Sunday, would sit down and spend, recklessly and foolishly, that very money which in another country they part with as if it were their very heart's blood? Yet so it is! Unfortunate Paddy is wiser anywhere than at home, where wisdom, sobriety, and industry are best calculated to promote his own interests.

This slight sketch of Phil Purcel we have presented to our readers as



Clearing the Ship.

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

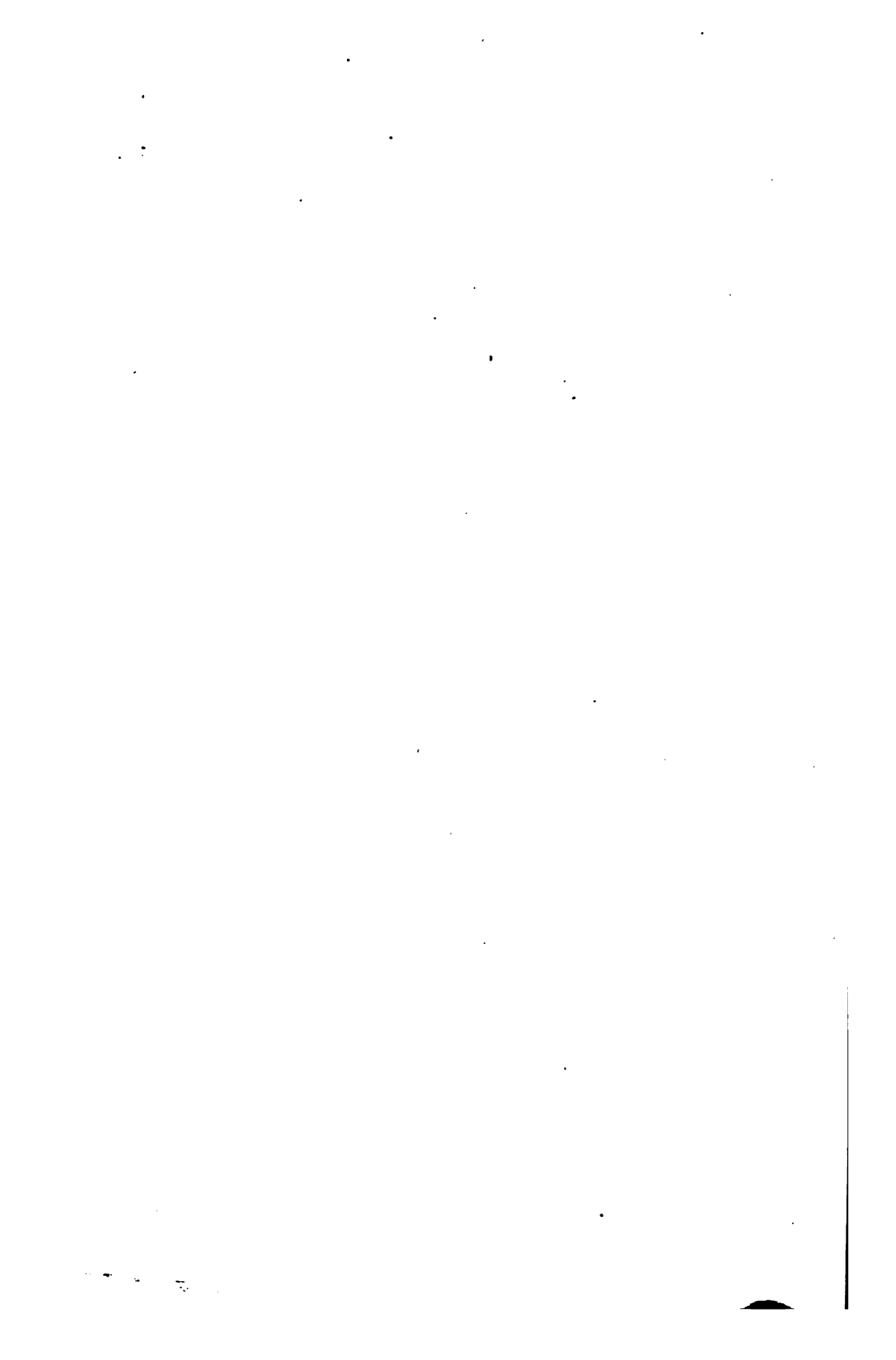


a specimen of the low, cunning Connaught-man ; and we have only to add, that neither the pig-selling scene, nor the battle on the deck of the vessel in Liverpool, is fictitious. On the contrary, we have purposely kept the tone of our description of the latter circumstance beneath the reality. Phil, however, is not drawn as a general portrait, but as one of that knavish class of men called "jobbers," a description of swindlers certainly not more common in Ireland than in any other country. We have known Connaughtmen as honest and honourable as it was possible to be ; yet there is a strong prejudice entertained against them in every other province of Ireland, as is evident by the old adage, "Never trust a Connaught-man."



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